

# **THE NARRATIVE OF ABUSE IN SESOTHO**

**by**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.



## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines data from account-giving in Sesotho. An account-making process according to Warren (1989), is more like a "life in motion" in which individual characters are portrayed as moving through their experiences, dealing with some problem in their lives and at the same time diligently searching for a resolution. It is then this quest to understand the major stresses in each individual's mind that is at the core of this study. The reasons that lead to the result of the daily experiences of destitution, depression, death, disability etc, are also addressed here.

Narrative accounts form the basis of moral and social events and as such, stories have two elements through which they are explored. They are explored firstly in the way in which they are told and secondly, in the way they are lived in the social context. These stories follow a historically or culturally based format, and to this effect, Gergen (1994) posited narrative criteria that constitute a historically contingent narrative form. Narrative forms are linguistic tools that have important social functions to satisfactorily fulfil such needs as stability narrative, progressive narrative and regressive narrative.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek data oor verslagdoening in Sesotho. 'n Verslagdoeningsproses is volgens Warren (1989) soos 'lewe in beweging', waarin individuele karakters voorgestel word as dat hulle beweeg deur ervarings, en een of ander probleem in hulle lewe aanspreek, en terselfdertyd soek na 'n oplossing. Dit is hierdie soeke om die spanninge te verstaan in die denke van elke individu wat aan die kern van hierdie studie lê. Die redes wat lei tot die resultaat van die daaglikse ondervindings van eensaamheid, depressie, dood, gestremdheid, ens. word ook beklemtoon in hierdie studie met verwysing na Sesotho verslagdoenings.

Narratiewe verslagdoening vorm die basis van morele en sosiale gebeure, en as sulks, vorm dit die twee elemente waardeur hulle ondersoek word. Dit word ondersoek, eerstens deur die wyse waarop dit vertel word en tweedens, deur die wyse waarop dit beleef word in die sosiale konteks. Hierdie stories volg 'n histories of kultureel-gebaseerde formaat en, tot hierdie effek, het Gergen (1994) narratiewe kriteria gepostuleer wat 'n histories afhanklike narratief vorm. Narratiewe vorme is linguistiese gereedskap wat belangrike sosiale funksies het om behoeftes te vervul aan stabiliteit narratiewe, progressiewe narratiewe, en regressiewe narratiewe.

## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my late mother Manini Ernestina Motapane, my husband Ponny Piet Chaka and my three children Motshidisi Patricia Chaka, Rethabile Joyce Chaka, and Thabiso Thapelo Chaka.



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate how people account for their actions in marital situations in Sesotho. Little research has been conducted on the analysis of accounts and no thorough investigation has been conducted on the causes of unpleasant situations the couples find themselves in.

When people are reproached for a social failure, they feel obliged to construct an account for the failure event, an account that will be honoured by the reproachers. An account can refer to the narratives or stories that we use to explain and make sense of a social interaction. It can also refer to the way in which people try to affect a repair of a social failure. The only way that an accounter can be able to address the most significant issues when accounting, is to consider the failure event for which she or he is reproached and come into terms with the issue that he or she has to account for. It is also important to consider the whens, whose, and hows of accounts. Thus, all human beings have to acknowledge the fact that, account-giving occurs in social context and as such may be affected in substantive ways by the social context.

Gergen (1994) states that self-narratives are forms of social accounting or public discourse in which narratives are preceived as conversational resources, and constructions open to continuous transformation as interaction continues. They can also be used as instruments of indicating future actions in a form of morality stories of a give society such as self-identification, self-justivication, self-criticism and social solidification. This study will then focus on self-narratives as a form of social accounting beginning with the character of self-narratives, the structuring of narrative accounts, varieties of narrative form and the emotion as relationship.

An extensive research is done on self-narrative accounts with life-stories on various subjects. These life stories are aimed at accounting for one's socially and culturally questionable behavior. They are also aimed at restoring one's dented or threatened image. These narrative

accounts are analysed according to the characteristics of a well-formed narrative from a culture based narrative.

## **1.2 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into six chapters which are organised as follows::

**Chapter 1** deals with the aims of the study, methodology and also the outline of the study.

**Chapter 2** deals with the politeness theory as postulated by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Thomas (1995). These two authors based their arguments on pragmatics.

**Chapter 3** deals with image restoration in public contexts.

**Chapter 4** deals with interpersonal accounts.

**Chapter 5** deals with the character of self-narrative.

**Chapter 6** is a conclusion of the study. In this chapter a summary is presented of the general observations gathered in the course of this study.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **POLITENESS THEORY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Thomas (1995) states that within pragmatics there has been a great interest in politeness to such an extent that politeness theory could be considered as a sub-discipline of pragmatics. Much has been written and different theories and paradigms have emerged. This chapter outlines the principal theories of politeness and makes some of the most common misunderstandings clearer.

#### **2.2 DELIMITING THE CONCEPT OF POLITENESS**

According to Thomas (1995) the term politeness, like cooperation, has caused much misunderstanding since late 1970s. Five separate, though related, sets of phenomena, which people have discussed under politeness, are:

- Politeness as real-world goal.
- Deference.
- Register.
- Politeness as a surface level phenomenon.
- Politeness as an illocutionary phenomenon.

##### **2.2.1 Politeness as a real-world goal**

Politeness is interpreted as a genuine desire to be kind to others. Linguists have access to what speakers say and to how their hearers react. Even though deference and register are not primarily pragmatic concept, they're discussed here because politeness is of central interest in pragmatics and is frequently confused with deference/register which are principally socio linguistic phenomena.

### **2.2.2 Deference versus politeness**

Deference refers to the respect we show to others by virtue of their higher status, greater age, etc. Politeness is a general matter of showing consideration to others. Deference and politeness can be seen clearly through general social behavior and linguistic means. For example we can show difference by standing up when a person of higher status enters a room, or show politeness by holding a door open to allow someone else to pass through. In the grammar of present day English, words that we use to show deference are the address forms e.g. Doctor, Professor, etc. and the use of honorifics such as Sir or Madam. First names or their diminutives are used to show a friendly, non-deferential relationship. In other cultures the use of honorifics or plain forms of the copula is not a matter of individual's choice, it's a must. A soldier has no choice to address a superior officer as Sir or Ma'am, military discipline dictates the forms used. Sometimes it's possible to be deferential without being polite.

### **2.2.3 Register**

Register refers to the way in which the language we speak or write differs according to the type of situation (Halliday 1978: 32). In situations like very formal meetings or in report-writing, formal language should be used. Formal lexis and forms of address should be used. Interruptions should be avoided.

### **2.2.4 Politeness as an utterance level phenomenon**

Early work in the area of politeness focused on utterance level realizations. Walter's (1979a and 1979b) defines his interest as being 'to investigate how much politeness could be squeezed out of speech act strategies alone', and to investigate the perception of politeness by native and non-native speakers of English and Spanish, using a 'standard lexical context' in order to establish a 'hierarchy of politeness', instructing his informants to ignore context as much as possible. In the context of an intimate relationship more polite forms appear in appropriately indirect. Some speech acts seem impolite. For example, there is no polite way in all the languages that I can use to ask someone to stop picking his/her nose. No matter how hard I try to be polite, it is always going to be offensive. We can't assess politeness



reliably out of context, Linguistic form alone can't render the speech act polite or impolite, but the linguistic form, the context of utterance, and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer can render the speech act as polite or impolite.

### **2.2.5 Politeness as a pragmatic phenomenon**

Leech (1980 [1977] and 1983a) and Brown and Levinson (1987 [1978]) interpreted politeness as a strategy employed by a speaker to achieve a variety of goals, like promoting or maintaining harmonious relations. The pragmatic approaches to politeness have been grouped under three headings: - the conversational – maxim view by Leech (1980 [1977] & 1983a), the face – management view by Brown and Levinson (1987 [1978]), and Fraser's (1990) own conversational – contract view. The fourth approach added is called pragmatic scales view proposed by Spencer-Oatey (1992)

## **2.3 POLITENESS EXPLAINED IN TERMS OF PRINCIPLES AND MAXIMS**

Leech (1980 [1977] and 1983a) states that politeness is very important in explaining why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean.

### **2.3.1 Ambivalence and politeness**

By employing an ambivalent utterance it's possible to convey messages which the hearer is liable to find disagreeable without causing excessive offence. For example, *if you find the note like this at a restaurant: if you want to enjoy the full flavour of your food and drink you will, naturally, not smoke during this meal. Moreover, if you did smoke you would also be impairing the enjoyment of other guests. In this restaurant, the management left to the guests to decide for themselves whether they are being asked or ordered not to smoke.*

### **2.3.2 Pragmatic principles**

Leech's (1980 [1977] 1983a) politeness principle (PP) says, minimize the expression of impolite beliefs; maximize the expression of polite beliefs. People sometimes say they can't

find the polite way of saying some things. For example, *there is no polite way of saying this. Your husband and I are lovers and he's leaving you for me.* Leech's main maxims are:

- I. Tact
- II. Generosity
- III. Approbation
- IV. Modesty
- V. Agreement, and
- VI. Sympathy

### 2.3.2.1 The tact maxim

This maxim states: "Minimize the expression of beliefs which imply cost to others; maximize the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to other".

- One aspect of the Tact maxim relates to the size of imposition. Minimizers should be used to reduce the implied cost to the hearer.

Examples:

*Ema hanyane!*

Hang on a second!

*Ke na le bothatjana.*

I've got a bit of a problem.

*Ke tla kgutla ka mora nakwana.*

I'll be back.

The strategy of minimizing the expression of cost to others is perceived as polite or impolite according to one's culture. Japanese student whose M.A. thesis was being supervised by her supervisor, she often sends him/her drafts of her work with a note attached:

This is a draft of chapter 4. Please read it and comment on it.

Other students would simply write: This is a draft of chapter 4. The fact that the student spelt out what she wanted done made her supervisor furious. He/she even mentioned to a



Japanese doctoral student how much it irritated him/her, and she pointed out that the M.A. student was simply acknowledging how much work she had let him/her in for.

- A second aspect is that of mitigating the effect of a request by offering optionality. This resembles the second of Lakoff's (1973) 'rules of politeness': 'Give options!' Allowing options is central to Western notions of politeness, but Oatey (1992:17) notes that it has little place in the Chinese conception of politeness. A polite Chinese host will choose your dishes in a restaurant without consulting you, the linguistic expression of optionality in, say, inviting someone to one's home, is not seen as polite.
- A third aspect is the cost/benefit scale: if something is perceived as being to the hearer's benefit, X can be expressed politely without employing indirectness: Have a chocolate! If X is seen as being "costly" to the hearer, greater indirectness may be required: Could I have one of your sandwiches? Here there is also an obvious connection with the 'size of imposition' dimension.

### 2.3.2.2 The generosity maxim

Leech's (1980 [1977] 1983) Generosity maxim states: "Minimize the expression of benefit to self; maximize the expression of cost to self". He suggested that it would be better to say: "Minimize the expression of benefit to others, maximize the expression of benefit to other". The Generosity maxim explains why it is fine to say: You must come and have dinner with us, while proposition that we will come and have dinner with you requires to be expressed indirectly. Leech indicates that the degree to which you are expected to apply this maxim vary according to languages or cultures. Under applying it will make the speaker appear mean, over applying it will seem sarcastic.

### 2.3.2.3 The approbation maxim

It states: "Minimize the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other; maximize the expression of beliefs which express approval of other". For example, *it's normal to say: I enjoyed your lecturer, but if you didn't you would keep quite about it or convey it indirectly.*

### 2.3.2.4 The modesty maxim

It states: “Minimize the expression of praise of self; maximize the expression of dispraise of self”. The application of this maxim varies from culture to culture.

### 2.3.2.5 The agreement maxim

The agreement maxim runs as follows: Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other”. People are more direct in expressing their agreement than disagreement. For example, *someone who holds opposed view to the one begin a counter-argument by saying: Yes, but ...*

### 2.3.2.6 The pollyanna principle

It uses minimizers such as a bit. For example, *“This essay’s a bit short”, when in fact it is much too short.* It’s a strategy which reduces the size of imposition.

## 2.3.3 Problems with Leech’s (1980) approach

It appears to be no motivated way of restricting the number of maxims.

## 2.4 POLITENESS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF FACE

The most influential theory of politeness was put forward by Brown and Levinson (1978 and revised in 1987). Central to their theory is the concept of face proposed by Goffman (1967). The term ‘face’ in the sense of ‘reputation’ or ‘good name’ have been first used in English in 1876 as a translation of the Chinese term ‘diu lian’ in the phrase ‘Arrangements by which China has lost face’. Since then it has been used in phrases like ‘losing face’, ‘saving face’. For example:

*O ntshentse lebitso.*

You lost my face.

*Ke senyehile lebitso.*



I lost my face.

*Ke kopa o boloke lebitso laka.*

Please save my face.

Example from Galsworthy (1928):

'They've got to save face. Saving face is the strongest motive in the world'.

Goffman (1967:5) defines face as:

... the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes – albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself.

Within politeness theory “face” is understood as every individual’s feeling of self-worth or self-image; this image can be damaged, maintained or enhanced through interaction with other. Face has “positive” and “negative” aspects. A person’s positive face is reflected in the desire not to be impeded or put upon, to have the freedom to act as one chooses.

#### **2.4.1 Face-threatening acts**

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that illocutionary acts that are liable to damage or threaten another person’s face are called “face-threatening acts (FTA’s)”. An illocutionary act can damage the hearer’s positive face by, for example, *insulting the other person or expressing disapproval of something which the other person holds dear, or the other person’s negative face may damage the speaker’s own positive face*. In order to reduce the possibility of damage to other person’s face or to the speaker’s own face, he or she may adopt certain strategies. The choice of strategy will be made on the basis of the speaker’s assessment of the size of the FTA. The size of FTA can be calculated on the basis of power (P), distance (D) and rating of imposition (R).

### **2.4.1.1 Super strategies for performing face-threatening acts**

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that you must first decide whether to perform the FTA or not. If the speaker does decide to perform the FTA, there are four possibilities: three sets of on-record super-strategies (perform the FTA on record without redressive action (bald-on-record), perform the FTA on-record using positive politeness, perform the FTA on-record using negative politeness) and off-record strategies. The speaker may avoid the FTA altogether. Each set of super strategies are discussed below.

### **2.4.1.2 Performing an FTA without any redress (bold-on-record)**

Sometimes external factors force an individual to speak directly, for example in emergency or where there is a major time constraint, or where there is some form of channel limitation (e.g. speaking on a field telephone). In emergencies or high task oriented situations, such as teaching someone to drive, the speaker likely to focus on the propositional content of the message, and pay little attention to the interpersonal aspect of what is said.

### **2.4.1.3 Performing an FTA with redress (positive politeness)**

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) their theory states that when you speak to someone you may orient yourself towards that individual's positive face, and employ positive politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987 [1978]:101-29) list fifteen positive politeness strategies giving copious illustrations from many different languages.

Example:

Male first-year student calling to female first-year student (whom he don't know) in college bar during 'Freshers' week':

Hey blondie, what are you studying, then? French and Italian? Join the club!

This student employed three of Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies: 'use in-group identity markers' (blondie), 'express interest in her' (asking her what she is studying), 'claim common ground' (join the club!)



#### 2.4.1.4 Performing an FTA with redress (negative politeness)

Negative politeness is oriented towards a hearer's negative face, which appeals to the hearer's desire not to be impeded or put upon, to be left free to act as they choose. Negative politeness manifests itself in the use of conventional politeness markers, deference markers, minimizing imposition, etc. Brown and Levinson (1987) list ten negative politeness strategies and examples in English are easy to find in more formal settings.

Many warning notices which have wide readership employ negative politeness.

Example:

It's necessary to request senders of 'junk' e-mail, e.g. 'chain' letters, to desist. It's a nuisance, against the rules, and invites disciplinary action.

Not only human beings, but even cartoon characters use negative politeness. In the following example Daffy Duck employs strategy 8 ('state FTA as a general rule') to get Silvester the cat to part with some of his food:

*Metswalle e arolelana hlooho ya tsie.*

'Friends always share!'

#### 2.4.1.5 Performing an FTA using off-record politeness

Brown and Levinson (1987) list fifteen strategies for performing off-record politeness.

Strategic for performing off-record politeness includes: giving hints, using metaphors, and being ambiguous or vague. Here are three examples, the first strategy 1 is hinting.

Example:

One student to another:

That isn't a crème egg I can see you eating, is it?

The second of strategy 9, involves a widely-invoked Japanese metaphor.

Example:

A Japanese student who lived outside the capital had taken a University entrance examination in Tokyo. One of her class-mates sent her the following telegram, to inform her that she had not passed:

[The cherry blossom has fallen].

The third example is of strategy 15 ('be incomplete', 'use ellipsis'), it's one of the most frequently-encountered off-record politeness strategies:

This is an extract from a novel in which Hosteen Pinto, a native America, has been accused of murder. Professor Bourbebonette is an anthropologist who has worked with him in the past. She believes him to be innocent and thinks the non-Indian FBI officer haven't investigated the case properly. She is trying to persuade a police Lieutenant, to take an interest in the case:

'She [Pinto's attorney] didn't know much ... she told us the Federal Public Defender's office had two investigators who might be helpful. But ...'

Professor Bourbebonette let the sentence trail off, intending to let the skepticism in her tone finish it.

Professor Bourbebonette is reluctant to criticize one police officer in front of another. She tries to avoid performing the FTA by not completing her sentence, but she doesn't expect the lieutenant to understand what she means.

#### **2.4.1.6 Do not perform FTA**

Brown and Levinson's (1987) final strategy 'Do not perform FTA', is self-explanatory: there are times when something is so face-threatening that you don't say it. Brown and Levinson (1987) do not discuss this strategy, but Tanaka (1993) discusses two sorts of 'saying nothing' (which, following Bonikowska (1988), she terms the 'opting out choice or OOC'). Sometime the speaker decides to say nothing and genuinely wishes to drop the matter; there are other occasions when an individual decides to say nothing but still wishes to achieve the effect



which the speech act would have achieved had it been uttered. Tanaka (1993:50-1) terms these two strategies OOC-genuine and OOC-strategic:

**OOO-genuine:** S doesn't perform a speech act, and genuinely intends to let the matter remain closed.

S/he does not intend to achieve the perlocutionary effect.

**OOO-strategic:** S doesn't perform a speech act, but expects A to infer her/ his wish to achieve the perlocutionary effect.

In a third situation, there is a strong expectation that something will be said, and saying nothing is in itself a massive FTA e.g. failing to express condolences to someone on the death of her/his loved one.

The following example is taken from the autobiography of Sir Kenneth Dover:

Aston was a senior research fellow at Corpus Christi. He was subject to bouts of drinking and severe depression; he could be difficult to work with and was something of an embarrassment to the College. At a meeting between president and Fellow, Aston said to Dover:

'You're trying to push me out of the College!'

Dover commented:

'... this was so obviously true that I didn't say anything'.

A few days later Aston killed himself.

#### **2.4.2 Criticisms of Brown and Levinson (1987)**

Their work has been influential and widely discussed, and a number of criticisms have been made of their model of politeness. FTA implies that an act is threatening to the face of the speaker or the hearer; in fact many acts can be seen to threaten the face of both S and H simultaneously. They say that the greater the degree of face-threat, the greater will be the degree of indirectness. Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that some speech acts are inherently face-threatening. From these two observations it might be concluded that some utterances pose no face-threat at all. Dascal (1977:315) argues that by merely speaking to

someone sets up what he terms a 'conversational demand': Simply by speaking we trespass on another person's space. Saying anything at all (or even saying nothing!) is potentially face-threatening.

Example, an apology threatens the speaker's face in an obvious way, but it can also be the source of embarrassment to the hearer. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that positive and negative politeness are mutually exclusive. In practice, a single utterance can be oriented to both positive and negative face simultaneously.

Example:

Woman addressing importunate man:

Do me a favour – piss off!

## **2.5 POLITENESS VIEWED AS A CONVERSATIONAL CONTRACT**

Fraser (1990) states that people are forced in interaction by "conversational contract" (CC) – the understanding which people bring to an interaction of the norms obtaining that interaction and of their rights and obligations within it. On the face of it, Fraser takes a more sociolinguistic approach to politeness than do Leech (1980) or Brown and Levinson (1987) – people employ the degree of politeness required by event or situation in which they find themselves.

Being polite constitutes operating within terms of the conversational contract.

Fraser (1990:232) points out that norms of politeness are:

renegotiable in light of the participants' perception or acknowledge the status, the power, and the role of each speaker, and the nature of the circumstances.

Fraser's model of politeness is very sketchy compared with those of Leech and Brown and Levinson and it's difficult to judge how it might operate in practice.



## 2.6 POLITENESS MEASURED ALONG PRAGMATIC SCALES

Spencer-Oatey (1992: 30-3) argues that the way Brown and Levinson (1987 [1978]) and Leech (1983a) formulated their theories of politeness left them open to being criticized on the grounds that they are culturally biased. For example, 'autonomy' is highly valued in Western society, but not always within Oriental cultures. In order to overcome the problems of cultural-specificity, Oatey proposes sets of dimensions. She suggests that all the research on politeness can be summarized in terms of these three sets of dimensions: individuals will select the point on the scale according to their cultural values and the situation within which they are operating.

Despite their different approaches, these various researchers have one thing in common: they all assume that face needs lie universally at set points on each of the relevant dimensions.

Oatey's scales are as follows (1992:30):

1. Need for consideration: autonomy – imposition
2. Need to be valued: approbation – criticism  
interest /  
concern
3. Need for relational identity: inclusion – exclusion  
equality – superordination /  
subordination

## CHAPTER 3

# IMAGE RESTORATION IN PUBLIC CONTEXTS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Benoit (1995) human beings must restore their reputations after alleged or suspected wrongdoing. This is unavoidable for four reasons:

- We inhabit a world of limited resources.
- Circumstances beyond our control prevent us from meeting our obligations.
- Human beings are imperfect and make mistakes.
- Because humans are individuals with different priorities, these promote conflict among those with competing goals.

These factors insure that perceived wrongdoing is a recurring feature of human activity. When such unavoidable misbehaviour occurs, others are likely to accuse, attack, scold, blame, censure, condemn, rail against, rebuke, or reproach us or object to our behaviour.

The attacks on our reputation are serious matters, for our image or reputation is vital to us. Face, image, or reputation does not only contribute to a healthy self-image, but it can create favorable impressions on others. A bad reputation may interfere with our interaction with others.

When our image is threatened, we feel forced to offer **explanations, defenses, justifications, rationalizations, apologies, or excuses** for our behavior.

Image restoration attempts are a pervasive form of communicative action.

- Denial is a strategy for avoiding blame. For example, Woody Allen denied charges that he had molested two of his adopted children ("Woody Allen Denies", 1992). A common response to charges of misconduct is to deny allegations.
- Another strategy for dealing with criticism is to respond in kind, attacking accusers.



- For charges which are impossible to deny, it's possible to admit guilt and still attempt to restore one's reputation. For example, Marge Schott, owner of the Cincinnati Reds baseball team, admitted using the word "Nigger" to refer to players, but declared that she didn't know it was considered offensive ("Schott Tries", 1992).

If the injury from the offensive act is not as significant as first believed, the damage to the image of the accused should be limited as well.

- Another strategy is to apologize for misconduct. Those who commit wrongful acts attempt to repair their reputation with a sincere apology.
- The accused of wrongdoing will take action to correct the problem.

Appropriate corrective action can help restore the face of a person guilty of wrongdoing. Blame occurs throughout human's life and face is important for everyone, so there is a need to cleanse one's reputation with discourse that occurs throughout our public and private lives.

Cody and McLaughlin (1990) develop several reasons for studying image restoration or accounts:

- To show how ordinary social actors understand their world through causal explanations.
- To examine how poorly handled predicaments can create conflict.
- To show that predicaments involve rewards and punishment for participants.
- And to help actors maintain a positive self-image. There are various approaches for examining verbal self-defense, some developed in rhetorical literature and in sociology.

Burke uses a term "guilt" to represent a undesirable state of affairs that can be remedied through defensive discourse. He explains the two fundamental processes for erasing guilt or restoring one's good reputation: victimage, scapegoating, or shifting the blame; and mortification or admitting wrongdoing and asking forgiveness.

Ware and Linkugel's (1997) theory of apologia was widely used in rhetorical self-defense. They identified four factors or rhetorical strategies in rhetorical self-defense: **denial**, **bolstering**, **differentiation**, and **transcendence**.

Scott and Lyman's (1968) classic work on accounts, extended work by Sykes and Matza (1957), offers a taxonomy for the provision of accounts for behavior subject to the criticism of others. They distinguished between two general types of accounts which are excuses and justifications.

Excuses are accounts in which the accused admits that the act was wrong, but doesn't accept full responsibility for that act. Justifications accept responsibility for the act but reject the claim that it was a wrongful act.

Defensive utterances (justifications, excuses, apologies) are persuasive attempts to:

- Pre-shape another's beliefs.
- Change his or her belief that the act was wrongful.
- Shift his or her attribution of responsibility for that act.

### **3.2 RHETORICAL APPROACHES TO IMAGE RESTORATION**

This section review rhetorical approaches to image restoration. Is divided into six sections. The reviewing of rhetorical criticism of image restoration and the four approach to analysis of this genre are examined.

### **3.3 EARLY CRITICAL STUDIES OF SELF-DEFENSE DISCOURSES**

Baskerville's (1952) analysis of Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech as part of a symposium on campaign rhetoric is one of the earliest examples of rhetorical criticism of defensive discourse.

Jackson's (1956) study of Clarence Darrow is another early rhetorical criticism of image restoration discourse.



### **3.3.1 Rosenfield's (1968) analog**

The first theoretical advance in our understanding of image restoration discourse occurred where Rosenfield (1968) performed an analogic analysis of the "Checkers" speech by Nixon and a speech by Truman. The "Checkers" speech by Nixon has been popular for rhetorical critics.

Rosenfield identified "four similarities in the two discourses which represent constants in the apologetic equation" (1968:449). The four characteristics of apologetic discourse identified in Rosenfield's (1968) analog are:

#### **3.3.1.1 A brief, intense controversy**

A brief, intense controversy describes the scene more than the discourse.

#### **3.3.1.2 Attacks on the opponent**

It recognizes that attacks on one's opponents are another plausible strategy for dealing with criticism (as Jackson [1956] observed).

#### **3.3.1.3 A concentration of data in the middle third of a speech**

This factor gives us no idea what sorts of claims or rhetorical strategies are developed by the data lumped in the middle or by the recycled arguments.

#### **3.3.1.4 A recycling of arguments from recent speeches**

Like a concentration of data in the middle third of a speech, this factor also doesn't give us an idea on what sorts of claims or rhetorical strategies are developed by the data lumped in the middle or by the recycled arguments.

### 3.3.2 Ware and Linkugel (1973) on apologia

Another important advance in rhetorical criticism of image restoration discourse is the theory of apologia proposed by Ware and Linkugel (1973). They identify four factors of self-defense:

- Denial is the first factor. Here the wrongdoer denied that he/she did something wrong. They included denial of bad intent (claiming that the act was performed with good intentions).
- Bolstering is the second factor. It reinforces the existence of a fact, object, or relationship. In bolstering, “a speaker attempts to identify himself with something viewed favorably by the audience” (p. 277). It attempts to counterbalance or offset the audience’s displeasure by associating the speaker with a different object or action, something for which the audience has positive affect. The hope is that the new positive perceptions of the rhetor will outweigh the negative ones from the undesirable act.
- The third factor of self-defense is differentiation. It’s an attempt at “separating some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship from some large context in which the audience presently views that attribute” (p. 278).
- Transcendence is the fourth factor of apology. It “joins some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship with some larger context within which the audience does not presently view that attribute” (p. 280). In contrast to differentiation, which separates the object from an undesirable context, transcendence places that object into a larger or broader and more favorable context.

Ware and Linkugel identify four potential postures or stances of self-defense:

#### 3.3.2.1 Speeches of self-defense

The wrongdoer claims that the act was performed with good intentions. He/she denies that an act is performed of bad intent.



### 3.3.2.2 They declare

The rhetor declares “I didn’t do it!” If those accused of wrong-doing can disassociate themselves from the object of the audience’s displeasure, then this strategy should help to restore the rhetor’s image. Nixon’s “Checkers” speech, in which he denied charges that he had benefited from a “slush fund”, is an example of this strategy.

### 3.3.2.3 They use either denial or bolstering

**Denial:** The wrong-doer denies that a wrongful act is performed of bad intend. He/she claims that the act was performed with good intentions.

**Bolstering:** It reinforces the existence of a fact, object, or relationship. In bolstering, “a speaker attempts to identify himself with something viewed favorably by the audience” (p. 277). Bolstering is not aimed directly at the cause of the speaker’s image problems. It attempts to counterbalance or offset the audience’s displeasure by associating the speaker with a different object or action, something for which the audience has positive affect. The hope is that the new positive perceptions of the rhetor will outweigh the negative ones from the undesirable act. Kennedy’s Chappaquiddick speech is used to illustrate this strategy. In it, Ware and Linkugel explain, he repeatedly attempted to develop a positive relationship with the people of Massachusetts.

### 3.3.2.4 Coupled with either differentiation or transcendence

**Differentiation:** It’s an attempt at “separating some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship from some larger context in which the audience presently views that attribute” (p. 278). This factor takes the threat to the rhetor’s image out of a negative context in the hopes that it’s that negative context, and not the object itself, which arouses the audience’s hostility. Kennedy’s Chappaquiddick speech is also used to illustrate differentiation, as Ware and Linkugel suggest that the senator tried to distinguish his normal self from the person who narrowly avoided drowning.



**Transcendence:** The remaining factor of apology, “joins some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship with some larger context within which the audience does not presently view that attribute” (p. 280). In contrast to differentiation, which separates the object from an undesirable context, transcendence places that object into a larger or broader and more favorable context. Ware and Linkugel suggest that the latter functions to “move the audience away from the particulars of the charge at hand toward a more abstract, general view” (p. 280). They offer Clarence Darrow as an example of this rhetorical strategy.

This establishes four apologetic postures or stances of self-defense:

- Absolute: Denial and Differentiation.
- Vindicative: Denial and Transcendence.
- Explanative: Bolstering and Differentiation.
- Justificative: Bolstering and Transcendence.

Ware and Linkugel says that an address may contain more than two of the four strategies (of denial, bolstering, differentiation and transcendence).

Kruse (1981b) argues that apologetic discourse responds to attacks on character. This conception limits use of the term “apologia” excluding it from situations in which:

- (i) There is no formal attack; and
- (ii) The attack focuses on policy rather than character.

Ware and Linkugel’s approach has also been used on sports rhetoric by Kruse (1981a) and Nelson (1984). Kruse examined the occurrence of apologia in team sport. She concluded that sports figures employ the same strategies as other social and political actors.

Burke (1988) applied apologia to discourse from religious figure, analyzing Martin Luther King Jr’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail”. Many studies have extended Ware and Linkugel’s theory of apologia. Most analyses concern apologetic discourse from political figures, but sports, religious, and corporate applications have appeared. They reveal the importance and utility of this theory to our understanding of image restoration.



### 3.3.3 Burke (1973) on purification

A third approach emerged from Kenneth Burke. He uses the term “guilt” to represent an undesirable state of affairs, an unpleasant feeling, which occurs when expectations concerning behavior are violated. When other factors create guilt, attacks on our reputation motivate rhetors to attempt to remove or reduce guilt.

He explains two fundamental processes for erasing guilt, or restoring one’s good reputation:

- Victimage, which is to scapegoat or to shift the blame; and
- Mortification, which is admission of wrongdoing and request for forgiveness.

According to Burke (1973) victimage involves a transference or giving of the burden of guilt to a “vessel” other than the original accused. Guilt is shifted from the rhetor to the victim and the rhetor’s reputation is cleansed.

Mortification involves a sacrifice of self, an acceptance of wrongdoing. Heartfelt confession and request for forgiveness may cleanse guilt and restore one’s image.

Burke (1970) states that one’s natural inclination is to use victimage. This approach has also been extended. Other researchers focused are political rhetoric and one study examined corporate rhetoric.

### 3.3.4 Ryan’s (1982) kategoria and apologia

Ryan (1982) argues that one must consider the defense (apologia) in terms of the specific attack (kategoria). By checking each speech against the other, the critic must be able to differentiate the vital issues from the spurious ones, to evaluate the relative merits of both speakers’ arguments, and to make an assessment of the relative failure or success of both speakers in terms of the critic outcome of the speech set. The critic can’t have a complete understanding of accusation or apology without treating them both (p. 254). He expands the genre from the conceptualization developed by Kruse (1981b), to include attacks on policy as well as character. He clearly sees a relationship between Ware and Linkugel’s theory and his approach:



In apology for policy, Cicero's four stases correspond to Ware and Linkugel's four postures in apology for character. The apologist for policy absolves himself of the fact (I did not do it), he explains the definition (I did not do what is alleged), he justifies the quality (I had laudable intentions), and he vindicates the jurisdiction (I appeal to a different audience or judge) (p. 257). This approach is illustrated in its initial development by an analysis of the controversy between Pope Leo X and Martin Luther and later with an examination of the clash between Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and King Edward VIII (Ryan, 1984; 1988a).

Ryan (1988a) also edited a book which has seventeen other illustrations of this approach. Most of these applications concern political figures, but religious figure, a major corporation, a scientist, and a key trial are also represented here. This book has played an important role in developing Ryan's notion of the speech set.

Benoit (1988) analyzes Senator Edward Kennedy's Chappaquidick speech. The accusations against Kennedy included concerns about both his responsibility for the accident and his failure to report it at once to the police. He attempted to shift the blame for the accident to situational features (the road etc). Kennedy also attempted to shift the blame for failing to report the accident to the trauma he suffered (exhaustion, a concussion). These strategies were effective in keeping his Senate seat, but were not sufficient to resurrect his presidential hopes.

Brock's (1988) analysis of President Gerald Ford's pardon of Nixon argued that his ultimate defense did not meet the standards Ford established upon assuming the presidency. Firstly, the pardon was so unpopular that it kept the nation from getting on with other important business. Secondly, he failed to treat the American people or Congress as partners. Thirdly, Ford failed to distance himself from Nixon's Watergate difficulties.

Senator Robert LaFollette was attacked for his failure to support Wilson during the first world war. Burgchardt (1988:p.10) explains that he (counter) attacked his opponents. Then he used transcendence to move the issue away from himself as a victim of attacks by his opponents to the issue of free speech or constitutional rights. Although he ultimately became victorious, Burgchardt concluded that "his effectiveness as an antiwar spokesman was severely curtailed".



President Truman relieved General Douglas MacArthur of duty. Evidence of MacArthur's insubordination was the subject of a new conference, but Truman's speech argued that MacArthur's policies would lead to war. MacArthur's defensive speech, delivered before a joint session of Congress, defended his policy and outlined actions he recommended. Discussing his language and delivery, Duffy wrote that MacArthur's speech was "animated in an auditory and visual drama that was less cerebral than emotional and moving" (1988, p. 92). In the final analysis, Truman's speech was probably more correct, but MacArthur's was more moving.

President Reagan's decision to visit and lay a wreath at a German military cemetery at Bitburg provoked a storm of controversy, when it was learned that it also contained the graves of SS troops. Friedenberga (1988) explained that Elie Wiesel, chair of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, noted writer, and recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, suggested that this act would be interpreted by many as an act of homage to the German soldiers. This accusation was repeated during the ceremony in which the president presented Wiesel with a Congressional Gold Medal. At a press conference, Reagan erred by attempting to suggest that the German soldiers were victims like the Jewish people. In a speech after the visit, President Reagan argued effectively that his actions should be taken as an attempt to achieve reconciliation, and he attempted to bolster his image by associating the United States with a Jewish cause.

After legislation supported by President Franklin D. Roosevelt suffered several defeats in Congress, he attacked several recalcitrant Democrats in the 1938 primaries, attempting to secure a more tractable Congress. He accused them of being too conservative, unwilling to try new solutions. Gravlee's (1988) essay analyzed responses by Senator George, Congressman O'Connor, and Senator Tydings. Senator George justified his voting decisions and bolstered his reputation by noting his support for selected New Deal legislation. He praised the president for past achievements while blaming presidential advisors and appointees. Congressman O'Connor bolstered his image and attacked his accuser. Lastly, Senator Tyding's bolstered himself and attacked his primary opponent. Senator George and Tydings won their primaries, while Congressman O'Connor lost.



Heisey (1988) studies President Ronald Reagan's apology in the Iran-Contra affair. The president was charged with trading arms for hostages, which is not only an accusation against policy, but because he had vowed never to negotiate with hostage-takers, functioned to attack his character as well. Heisey's analysis examined numerous speeches and press conferences in which the president used denial, emphasized investigations, stressed his good intentions, attempted to refocus his audience's attention, and after the Tower Commission Report revealed his involvement, he announced changes in personnel and procedures to correct the problem. Although his popularity dropped during the crisis, he succeeded in putting this episode behind him.

Ryan (1988b) also analysis Senator Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech. Nixon engaged in bolstering as he mentioned his career in public service, including his role in the matter of Alger Hiss. He denied that the money had gone to him, he denied that it was a secret fund, and he denied providing political favors for contributors. He justified the fund as saving taxpayers' money, and he attacked his opponents. He was successful in his bid to remain on Eisenhower's ticket as a vice president.

These studies demonstrate the importance of Ryan's claim that it's important to examine the defense in light of the attack.

### **3.4 OTHER IMAGE RESTORATION CRITICISM**

Dorgan (1972) analyzes rhetoric from confederate veterans after the Civil War and reported four themes:

- The confederate cause was a glorious sacrifice;
- Defeat is not a negative moral judgement;
- The defeat reflects divine will; and
- The defeat served a greater, long-term goal.

Benoit (1982) identifies a number of strategies that emerged as his defense developed over time emphasizing investigation, shifting blame, refocusing attention, indicting his main



accuser, emphasizing confidentiality, mandate, his cooperation, using executive privilege, and quoting from the transcripts.

Hahn and Gustainis (1987:44) identify recurrent arguments in defensive presidential rhetoric. They are grouped around three presidential myths:

1. “all problems are caused by out-groups;
2. our leaders are benevolent heroes who will lead us out of danger; and
3. the function of the citizen is to sacrifice and work hard to do the bidding of the leader”.

Their “topoi” are meant to be descriptive and are illustrated with examples from several presidents.

Benson (1988) studies Johnson & Johnson’s defensive strategies after the second Tylenol poisoning episode, concluding that it successfully used flexibility and proaction.

Reagan’s rhetoric on the Environmental Protection Agency Superfund controversy was analyzed by Rowland and Rademacher (1990). They report that the effectively employed three main strategies: emphasizing his general commitment to positive values rather than advocating specific policies, blaming his subordinates, and taking action that was symbolic to end the crisis.

Gullifor, Panici & Benoit (1991) analysis Reagan’s discourse on the Iran-Contra affair. Although his defense developed through several stages, there were instances of denial, evasion of responsibility, minimization, mortification, and plans to correct the problem. He was most successful when he shifted from an overall stance of denial to one of mortification.

Benoit and Brinson (1994) analysis AT&T’s image repair discourse following an interruption in its long-distance service in New York City during September 1991. After an unwise and unsuccessful attempt to shift the blame to lower-level workers, AT&T took out full-page advertisements in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post. This defensive discourse employed mortification, corrective action, and bolstering. The defense was successful in repairing its damaged image.



## ACCOUNTS AND IMAGE RESTORATION

### 3.5 INTRODUCTION

This section addresses theories of image restoration dealing with account and received their primary development in the social science literature. It discusses key assumptions, typologies of accounts, account phases, reproaches and accounts, usage of accounts, honoring (accepting) accounts and accounts as a form of speech act.

### 3.6 EARLY ASSUMPTIONS

Heider (1944) as quoted by Benoit (1995) states that one's image or reputation is influenced by the quality of acts for which one is held responsible. He states that "an act of low value will lower the ego level, and an act of high value will raise it" (p. 368). He cites work by Claparede (1927) that distinguished between two options for dealing with problematic events:

- Excuse (denying responsibility for the undesirable act); and
- Imputation (blaming others for the negative act).

Dewey (1922, 1939) as quoted by Benoit (1995) discusses motive, which was defined as an utterance that arose after an event to explain or account for it. Austin (1961) argues that excuses arise "where someone is said to have done something which is bad, wrong, inept, and unwelcome, or in some other of the numerous possible ways untoward. There upon he, or someone on his behalf, will try to defend his conduct or get him out of it". He suggests that we have two basic options to accept responsibility but deny that it was bad, in the other we admit that it was bad but don't accept full responsibility.

Later this image restoration was known as excuses and justifications. This utterance attempts to explain or justify our behavior against the unfavorable perceptions of others. These utterances may be called motives or excuses, justifications or rationalizations. Such statements come in two basic forms:

- Denial of responsibility for the unpleasant act; and
- Reduction of the negative perceptions associated with the act.



### 3.7 TYPOLOGIES OF ACCOUNTS

This section describes lists of accounts from Sykes and Matza (1957), Scott and Lyman (1968), Goffman (1971), Schonbach (1980), Schlenker (1980), Tedeschi and Reiss (1981), and Semin and Manstead (1983).

#### 3.7.1 Sykes and Matza (1957)

Typology of accounts offered by Sykes and Matza (1957), is a contribution toward understanding juvenile delinquency. Their analysis discusses five techniques of neutralization:

- (i) Denial of responsibility, which includes unintentional or accidental acts.
- (ii) Denial of injury, which claims that no actual harm was done, even if the act is considered inappropriate: “Oh, you aren’t really hurt!”
- (iii) Denial of victim, here the victim suggests that the injured party “deserved” it or that the victim is unknown. Harm done to the innocent may be viewed as worse than harm to the guilty.
- (iv) Condemnation of condemners, the accused may condemn his/her attackers, which tends to change the subject of the conversation, a counterattack may shift attention away from charges against you to your allegations against them.
- (v) An appeal to higher loyalties, which justifies an action based on appeal to a different reference group; “You are being fired for the good of the company” serves as an example of this defense. An operationalization of these techniques was developed by Rogers and Buffalo (1974).

Sykes and Matza’s approach is unusual in that they argued that these strategies may precede and legitimize delinquent behavior, or “pre-empt” possible objections.

### 3.7.2 Scott and Lyman (1968)

Scott and Lyman (1968:46) defines an account as “a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior” and distinguished between two general types of accounts, consistent with Austin’s (1961) basic analysis.

- Scott and Lyman (1968) explain that “Excuses are accounts in which one admits that the act in question is bad, wrong, or inappropriate but denies full responsibility”.
- Justifications are accounts in which one accepts responsibility for the act, but denies the derogatory quality associated with it. Each of these possibilities are subdivided further in Scott and Lyman’s essay. Firstly, they identified four different types of excuses:
  - (i) Accidents, they provide excuses when we find the explanation for our undesirable behavior outside ourselves. E.g. “blaming one’s lateness to work on the heaviness of traffic” is an example of an excuse based on accidents.
  - (ii) Defeasibility, is when one lacks the knowledge. “No one told me the Xerox machine was out for repair!” or the will (intoxication, mental illness) to successfully complete an action. They also suggested that this form of excuse could be equated with Sykes and Matza’s technique of denial of responsibility.
  - (iii) Biological drives, they may serve as excuses when minors are less able than adults to control their urges.
  - (iv) Scapegoating, alleges that one’s undesirable behavior was a “response to the behavior or attitudes of another”. This excuse might be better labeled “provocation”. An example might be the adolescent who spends a lot of time with “undesirable” persons (and getting into trouble with them) because his parents criticize or complain about his behaviour whenever he is at home.

Four types of justification proposed by Scott and Lyman (1968):

#### 3.7.2.1 Denial of injury

It claims that no actual harm was done, even if the act is considered inappropriate: “Oh, you aren’t really hurt!”



### 3.7.2.2 Denial of victim

Can suggest that the injured party “deserved” it or that the victim is unknown. Harm done to the innocent may be viewed as worse than harm to the guilty.

### 3.7.2.3 Condemning the condemners

The accused may condemn his/her attackers, which tends to change “the subject of the conversation”; that is, a counterattack may shift attention away from charges against you to your allegations against them.

### 3.7.2.4 Appeal to loyalty

Justifies an action based on appeal to a different reference group; “You are being fired for the good of the company”, it’s an example of this defense.

To these possibilities, Scott and Lyman (1968) added:

3.7.2.5 Sad tales explaining or justifying current misbehavior on the basis of past difficulties; and

3.7.2.6 Self-fulfillment explaining misbehavior as important to personal satisfaction.

## 3.7.3 Goffman (1971)

Goffman (1971) identifies five accounts as responses to a face-threatening event: The offender may issue a “traverse or rejoinder”,

- (i) Denies that offensive act occurred or that accused committed it.
- (ii) Admit that the act occurred (and that the actor was responsible) but redefine the act as not offensive.
- (iii) Admit that the act occurred (and that the actor was responsible for it) but argues that the negative consequences were not foreseeable.
- (iv) The offender may also admit that the act occurred but claim reduced competence.

- (v) The wrongdoer may admits carelessness in performing the act or ignorance of the undesirable consequences of the act.

Goffman suggests an apology to handle a problematic situation. It consists of the bad self, who committed the undesirable act, and the good self, who deplores that act.

A complete apology has five elements:

- Expression of regret;
- Acknowledgement of expected behavior and sympathy for the reproach;
- Repudiation of the behavior and the “self” committing it;
- Promise to behave correctly in future; and
- Atonement and compensation.

Goffman (1971) also discusses requests as remedial moves. Requests are found before or at the beginning of the event. Their function is to reduce the ill feeling generated by untoward behavior. E.g., before jostling another person in the press of a crowd, one might ask, “Do you mind if I try to squeeze past you?”

### **3.7.4 Schonbach (1980)**

Schonbach (1980) presents a new taxonomy based on the previous literature and on accounts elicited from subjects who imagined themselves in a failure event.

The difference between Schonbach’s (1980) and Scott and Lyman’s (1968) system is the addition of concessions and refusals.

Concessions include full or partial admission of guilt, expressions of regret, and offers of compensation. Refusals may deny that the failure event occurred, suggest that others are responsible, or suggest that the accuser has no right to attack. Schonbach (1990) also offers finer distinctions than made previously (e.g. Scott and Lyman (1968) offered “denial of victim” as a form of justification; Schonbach (1990) lists two variants of “role of victim”, “justification of the damage with qualities of victim” and “justification of the damage with acts of victim”)



and additional subcategories (e.g. illness, addiction, drunkenness seem to be specific variants of Scott and Lyman's (1968) defeasibility).

Schonbach (1980) doesn't illustrate all of the categories he proposed. E.g., it's not clear what is meant by the refusal form. He also doesn't discuss the reasons underlying some of his distinctions (e.g. why it's important to have separate categories for past restitution or compensation and offers of future restitution or compensation?). However he did offer a useful, if brief, analysis of accounts especially his addition of concession and refusals as possible responses to accusations. McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair (1983) propose that silence should be added to Schonbach's analysis.

Schonbach (1990) extends his work on accounts. He reports the results of several studies and produced an extensive list of accounts. His list consists of fourteen concessions, thirty-nine excuses, twenty-seven justifications, and forty-two refusals.

### 3.7.5 Schlenker (1980)

Schlenker (1980:137) defines predicaments as "situations in which events have undesirable implications for the identity-relevant images actors have claimed or desire to claim in front of real or imagined audiences"). The intensity of a predicament is related to its severity and the actor's apparent responsibility for it. He acknowledges that actors may attempt to avoid, conceal, or retreat from the unpleasant situations. He identifies three forms of accounts or "explanations of a predicament-creating event designed to minimize the apparent severity of the predicament" defenses of innocence, excuses, and justifications.

**Defenses of innocence** attempt to demonstrate that the actor had nothing to do with the supposed untoward event: either the event never happened or, if it did, the actor was not responsible for it.

The second form of remedial move is **excuses**. They attempt to minimize responsibility for an act. This can be attempted by claiming that the consequences were not foreseen or claiming extenuating circumstances. Two variants of extenuating circumstances were mentioned by Schlenker (1980), which are scapegoating, or arguing that others provoked the



event (citing Scott and Lyman (1968)); and diffusion of responsibility or suggesting that others were involved, reducing the responsibility attributable to other people.

The third form of explanation is justifications. Justifications try to mitigate the objectionable nature of the event. The actor may attempt to minimize the unpleasantness of the event directly, by comparison with others who are not punished (and possibly have done worse things), and by justification through higher goals. Direct minimization includes Scott and Lyman's (1968) notion of denial of victim, but it also includes minimizing the negative consequences of the predicament.

### **3.7.6 Tedeschi and Reiss (1981)**

Tedeschi and Reiss (1981) provide revision of Scott and Lyman's (1968) conception of accounts. They do not add additional general categories (like "concessions" to those of Scott and Lyman (1968), but focus on excuses and justifications. They elaborate those categories as defeasibility. Scott and Lyman (1968:48-49) intend this excuse to include claims such as "not fully informed", "misinformation", "intoxication", "lack of intent", and "failure to foresee the consequences", they all appear as separate categories in Tedeschi and Reiss. Tedeschi and Reiss also add new excuses such as "distraction by other events", "lack of time for deliberation (e.g. crisis)", "drugs", "coercion by others", "hypnotized", and "brainwashed". They also discuss justifications as responses to predicaments. Again they elaborate on Scott and Lyman's typology, offering, six specific types of "self-fulfillment". In the same way, Scott and Lyman (1968) list "appeal to higher loyalties" as a form of justification, and Tedeschi and Reiss (1981) listed four various sorts of loyalties. They also add new justifications such as forms of appeal to higher authority (e.g. God, Satan, government), reputation building, appeal to norms of justice, and appeal to humanistic values. Reputation building is ironically attempts to restore a tarnished reputation by arguing that an act was done to enhance one's good name.

### **3.7.7 Semin and Manstead (1983)**

Semin and Manstead (1983) review most of this literature but omit only Schlenker's treatment and provide a synthesis of these categories. Even though they discuss Sconbach's (1990)



system, they exclude concessions or refusals. This approach is the most complete discussion of accounts of those reviewed. These approaches to image restoration can be grouped into two sets of theories. One set deals with excuses and justification (Sykes & Matza (1957), Scott & Lyman (1968), Tedeschi & Reiss (1981), and Semin & Manstead (1983)). The other group of theories includes in addition to excuses and justifications the denial, refusals, or claims of innocence (Goffman (1971), and Schonbach (1980)). Tedeschi and Reiss (1981) include mistaken identify, a form of refusal, so an argument could be made for placing them in the second group.

### 3.8 ACCOUNT PHASES

Most of the work reviewed here focuses on creating typologies of strategic options for restoring image, but other issues have been addressed as well. Goffman (1967) as quoted by Benoit (1995) suggests that accounts pass through four moves, challenge, offering, acceptance, and thanks. Schonbach's (1980) analysis indicates that account episodes pass through four phases: the failure event, a reproach, the account, and an evaluation of the account. Cody and McLaughlin (1985) argues that accounting sequences consists of at least three basic moves: request for repair, remedy, and acknowledgement. Similarly, Buttny (1987:77) argues that account episodes involve three steps: problematic event, account, and evaluation. He argues that accounts don't necessarily reply to an (overt) reproach: "For instance, an offended person may pass from reproaching the offender, and allow the offender the opportunity to initiate the account", or the victim may not know of the offending act when the actor offers an account.

These authors don't agree on whether it's the problematic event or a reproach (request for repair) concerning that event which constitutes the initial part of an accounting sequence, there is general agreement about this process. A person commits an act that appears undesirable to another person or persons. This results in a reproach or request for a repair. Either the act (and assumptions about negative reactions to the act) or a reproach about the act provokes a response, the actor's account. This account is then evaluated by the person to whom it was issued. Lastly, the offending actor may offer thanks for acceptance of the account.



Schonbach (1990) reports array of studies organized around the phases of an account. In some studies, subjects are asked to role-play the reproach. In other research, subjects role-play the actor and provide other tape-recorded or written accounts in response to a reproach provided by the researcher. Lastly, in a third group of studies, subjects are asked to role-play the other, evaluating accounts provided by the researcher.

### **3.9 REPROACHES AND ACCOUNTS**

Schonbach and Kleibumhuter (1990) ask subjects to imagine that they had been involved in a problematic situation (a child they had been baby-sitting drank some cleaning fluid and required medical treatment) and to respond to one of three remarks from the child's parents: A neutral question, a reproach derogating their self-esteem, or a reproach derogating their sense of control. Either form of reproach elicited fewer concessions and more justifications and refusals than the neutral question (no difference occurred in the number of excuses offered). Similarly, McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair (1983) report that mitigating reproaches tends to elicit mitigating accounts, while aggravating reproaches elicit aggravating accounts. McLaughlin, Cody, and Rosenstein (183) find that the use of concession, excuse, and justification are not associated with particular reproaches. Refusal to account is likely when the other use rebuke, request for account, and superiority. Thus, while the evidence is mix, the use of reproaches may elicit fewer conciliatory responses.

### **3.10 USAGE OF ACCOUNTS**

This section discusses production of accounts in response to face-threatening predicaments. Firstly, general treatments of account production will be reviewed. Discussion of severity and extent of blame on account production will follow. Lastly, research on when people use false account will be reviewed.

Gonzales, Pederson, Manning, and Wetter (1990) report that in a contrived accident, subjects produce more mitigating (concessions, excuses) than aggravating (justifications, refusals) responses. When ask to provide responses in hypothetical situations, Gonzales, Manning, and Haugen (1992) report that concessions are produced more often, followed by excuses, justifications and refusals (in this order). Garrett, Brandford, Meyers and Becker (1989) report



that telephone interviews with managers of corporations that had been boycotted produced accounts in this manner: justifications: 72 percent, denial: 13 percent, excuse: 11 percent, and concession: 5 percent. Schonbach's (1990) role playing studies show that subjects provide situational constraints (both as excuses and justifications), express regret (generally, regret for their role in the offense, and regret for the consequences to the victim), and, least frequently, expressions of concern with pleas for pardons. McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair (1983) add a fifth general type of account which is silence to Schonbach's four major types of accounts (concessions, excuses, justifications, and refusals). They asked subjects to recall accounts they had provided to others in the past. Excuses were most frequently reported form of account. Concessions and excuses tend to be produced more often than justifications and denials.

Some relevant studies have been conducted under the rubric of the effect of embarrassment. Modigliani (1971) reports that self-reported embarrassment correlates positively with coded face-work. Utterances intend to improve the subject's image. Metts and Cupach (1989) ask subjects to recall an embarrassing predicament and to report their response to it. Avoidance was used more often than expected by chance; aggression was used less often than chance, there was no difference in the reported frequencies of remediation, humor, excuse, escape, apology, and justification. Similarly, Cupach and Metts (1992) find avoidance and humor to be the most commonly recalled strategies for dealing with embarrassment, and aggression and apology occurred least often. When people feel embarrassed, they're likely to provide face-saving utterances. They avoid the embarrassment or make it lighter. Accounting strategies like remediation, excuse, justification, apology also occur, but less frequently. Physical or verbal aggression is the least likely response to embarrassment.

Schlenker and Darby (1981) report that subjects were likely to provide more complex and fewer perfunctory apologies as the severity of the offense increased. McLaughlin, Cody and O'Hair (1983) find that when the offense is serious, concession is a likely response. Concessions are more likely to occur when the apologist feel guilty, refusal and silence are more likely to occur when the actor feel little or no guilt.

This research suggests that people like to provide excuses and concessions for their alleged misdeeds. The research on embarrassment suggests people like to pretend the predicament



simply hadn't occurred (or wasn't that bad). Severity of harm influence production of accounts. Lastly, when their personal preference or negligence is responsible for the predicament, people are more likely to offer false excuses than when other factors were responsible for the failure event.

### **3.11 HONORING ACCOUNTS**

This section examines predictions from Scott and Lyman (1968) about effectiveness of accounts. It's followed by a discussion of the effects of account form on its acceptability. Then the role of apparent severity of offense and perceived responsibility of the actor on effectiveness of accounts is examined. Finally, an alternative to accounts is discussed.

Scott and Lyman (1968) suggest that an account will not be honored if it's considered to be either illegitimate or unreasonable. They explain that accounts are considered illegitimate when the undesirable behavior is more significant than the account or when the account concerns a motive not acceptable to the audience. Accounts are unreasonable when they do not reflect ordinary social knowledge of reasonable behavior and expectations. One aspect of legitimacy of the claim is that the account must outweigh the offense. Evidence is reported by Gonzales, Manning and Haugen (1992), who find that participants predicted that their accounts would be less likely to be accepted when the consequences of their act are severe than mild. Research suggests that accounts are more likely to be accepted when the offense is mild than severe.

The second component of legitimacy concerns the acceptability of a motive to the audience. Morris Coursey (1989) indicate that three variables influenced managers' acceptance of employee accounts: the employee's reputation, the account's plausibility, and evidence that confirms or contradicts the account.

Accounts are also predicted to be unacceptable when they are inconsistent with ordinary social knowledge. Riordan, Marlin, and Kellogg (1983) indicate that normativeness did affect attributions of responsibility and perceptions of the act. Research has also investigated the effects on honoring of the form of an account. One study found denials and excuses to be effective accounts. McLaughlin, Cody and French (1990) investigate perceptions of those



charges with two common forms of traffic offenses, running a red light and speeding. Those who used logical proofs were thought less likely to have been penalized and less likely to have been responsible or to have intentionally broken the law.

Other research suggests that excuses are an effective response to a face threat. McLaughlin, Cody and Rosenstein (1983) find that excuse is associated with honoring and that justification and concession are associated with retreat. However other research suggests that justification can be useful strategy for image restoration. Other research didn't show overall superiority for either excuse or justification. Research tends to show that the presence of an apology can create a more favourable impression of the actor than no apology.

Some studies address the effects of severity of the offense on an account's effectiveness. Gonzales, Manning and Haugen (1992) find that an account is more likely to be honored when the severity of the offense is less than when it's greater. Two of Scott and Lyman's (1968) three predictions on honoring accounts were confirmed: severity of offense is inversely related to effectiveness, and normativeness plays a role in the acceptability of excuses. Only apology is generally found to be an effective form of account. Accounts are more likely to be accepted when the offensive act is less severe and the actor less responsible for that act. Lastly, when the situation is ambiguous, the actor may be able to redefine the situation so as to avoid threat to face. Effectiveness of account has generally been found to vary inversely with severity of the offense and actor's perceived responsibility.

## A THEORY OF IMAGE RESTORATION

### 3.12 INTRODUCTION

This section develops a theory of image restoration discourse. Firstly, key assumptions are described, then an integrated typology, and the relationship of this theory to other approaches is explored.

### 3.13 ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS THEORY

Two key assumptions provide the foundation for this theory of image restoration strategies. Firstly, communication is best conceptualized as a goal-directed activity. Secondly, maintaining a positive reputation is one of the central goals of communication. Each of these assumptions will be discussed separately below.

#### 3.13.1 Communication is a goal-directed activity

The first assumption of this theory is that communication is goal directed. The following genres are goal-directed:

- ***Political rhetoric:*** proves whether a policy should be adopted;
- ***Judicial rhetoric:*** decides questions of justice or injustice; and
- ***Epideictic:*** it argues that a person is worthy of praise or blame.

Burke declares that an act “can be called an act only if it involves a purpose” (1968:446). Burke says that rhetoric is purposeful directly or indirectly.

Fisher (1970) recognizes the importance of goals or purpose in discourse. He stated that there are four central motives:

- (i) Affirmation, which creates an image; (ii) Reaffirmation, which revitalizes one; (iii) Purification, which reforms an image; and (iv) Subversion, which attacks an image.



Fisher's rhetoric is goal-directed activity and it defines its purposes in relationship to images. Some rhetorical theorists considered rhetoric to be the art of persuasion and that rhetorical discourse is purposeful.

Literature of rhetorical theory assumes that rhetoric is a goal-directed, purposeful, or intentional activity. Literature on communication theory also assumes that communication is goal-directed.

Clark and Delia (1979) advance a popular typology of communication. They indicated the three objectives explicitly or implicitly present for negotiation in every communicative transaction:

- (i) **Overtly instrumental objectives**, here the response is required from one's listener(s) related to a problem defining the task of the communicative situation;
- (ii) **Interpersonal objectives**, which involve maintenance of a relationship with the other(s); and
- (iii) **Identify objectives**, in which there is management of the communicative situation.

Assumption as broad as this requires qualifications. This one also requires qualifications.

1. Communicators may have multiple goals that are not completely compatible.
2. Sometimes a person's goal, motive or purpose are vague, ill-formed, or unclear.
3. Some behaviours are automatic, they aren't controlled. In situations important to us, we plan aspects of our utterances carefully.
4. Even if an individual's goals are clear, it may be difficult for others to identify a communicator's goal(s).

Communication is best conceptualized as an instrumental activity.

### 3.13.2 Maintaining a favorable reputation is a key goal of communication

The second key assumption of theory of image restoration is that maintaining a favorable impression is an important goal in communication. The need for discourse designed to restore our good name arises because, as human beings, we inevitably engage in behavior



that makes us vulnerable to attack. Firstly, our world possesses limited resources: there is only so much money, time, office space, computer time, workers etc. When the distribution of these scarce resources fails to satisfy a person's desires, dissatisfaction occurs. It's impossible to satisfy everyone, so these complaints tend to recur. Secondly, events beyond our control can prevent us from meeting our obligations. Faulty alarm clocks can make us late, important mail may not reach us, or our computer system may go down when a critical report is due. Thirdly, people make mistakes because they are human. They accidentally lose things borrowed from others, they also forget to attend meetings. Finally, people differ over goals. Conflict over goals creates dissension.

Semin and Manstead (1981) report that when "breaches of conduct occurs, "actors assume that they have projected a negative image of themselves, even if the breach is an unintentional one". They worry that others will think less of them when apparent mistake occur, and this threat to their image is thought to increase as their responsibility increases. This is related to Burke's (1973) notion of guilt and embarrassment. Others criticize us when we misbehave. They complain about what we said and about the manner in which we said it.

McLaughlin, Cody and Rosenstein (1983) identify four types of reproaches or utterances that provoke accounts or apologies: Expressing, surprise or disgust; suggesting that the person being reproached is morally or intellectually inferior; requesting an account; and rebuking another person.

Our vulnerability to criticism leads to (internal) guilt and (external) threats to our face, both of which motivate a reaction from the actor. Goffman (1967:27) explains that "When a face has been threatened, face-work must be done". Fischer (1970) suggests that one of the basic motives of rhetoric is purification of an image. Face is so important that persuasive attacks motivate defensive responses because firstly, it's a crucial commodity because it contributes to a healthy self-image. A second reason why image is important concerns its role in the influence process. Thirdly, because one's face is so important, Brown and Levinson (1978) observe that "people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened".

When our image is threatened, we feel forced to offer explanations, defenses, justifications, apologies, rationalizations or excuses for our behaviour.



### 3.14 IMAGE RESTORATION DISCOURSE

Theory of image restoration assumes that communication is, in general, a goal-directed activity. It focuses on one particular goal in discourse: restoring or protecting one's face. This isn't the only goal, or necessarily the most important goal for a specific actor in a given situation. However, it's one of the central goals in communication. Because our image is important to us, when it is threatened, we are motivated to take action to alleviate this concern. The way in which these image restoration strategies function to repair one's damage face can be understood through an analysis of the nature of attacks, reproaches, or complaints. An attack on one's face is comprised of two components: Firstly, an act occurred which is undesirable; secondly, you're responsible for that action. Only if both of these conditions are believed to be true by the relevant audience is the actor's image at risk. Let us consider these conditions separately.

Firstly, for one's image to be threatened, a reprehensible act must have been committed. If nothing offensive happened, or if the actor believes that what happened isn't considered to be offensive by the salient audience, then the actor's face isn't threatened. Before actors will be concerned about negative effects on their image, they must believe that a salient audience disapproves of the action. The "action" must be construed broadly, to include words as well as deeds and to include failure to perform expected actions as well as performance of undesirable action.

Secondly, damage to one's reputation requires that the actor be held responsible for the occurrence of that reprehensible act by the relevant audiences. No matter how terrible it was, it isn't reasonable to form an unfavorable impression of a person who isn't thought to be responsible for that act. The key point is not whether in fact the actor caused the damage, but whether the relevant audience believes the actor to be the source the reprehensible act. If a person is thought to be responsible for an act perceived as undesirable, that person's face is likely to suffer. Before people are prompted to restore their reputation, they must believe that audience holds them responsible. Responsibility is not a simple true or false proposition. If several persons jointly committed an offence, we might not hold them all fully responsible, but we may apportion the blame among them. Some might be held to be more responsible



for an undesirable act than others. Again, we tend to hold people more accountable for the effects they intended and hold them less blameworthy for unintended effects.

Viewing the image restoration event in terms of how attacks function explains how image restoration strategies work. Some defenses attempt to deny that unacceptable act occurred or that the accused was responsible for it. If no undesirable act occurred, the accused's image shouldn't be damaged. If the accused didn't commit it, the accused's face shouldn't be damaged by that action. Another defensive possibility is to attempt to reduce responsibility for the offensive act. In these cases, one may not be able to completely deny responsibility for the act. A person may claim to have been **provoked** and thus not solely responsible. One may offer a defense of **defeasibility**, that the action was due to lack of information or ability, and hence not entirely one's own fault. A third possibility, the offender declares that the action occurred **accidentally**. Or one may claim that the act was performed with **good intentions**. All these strategies seek to reduce the offender's perceived responsibility for the undesirable act and hence mitigate the damage to face from that act.

It's possible to reduce the perceived offensiveness of the act through several strategies. A person can also reduce the perceived offensiveness of the act by using **bolstering**. Bolstering attempts to improve the accused's image in hopes of making up for the damage to the face from the offensive act. **Minimization** lessens the magnitude of the negative feelings attributed to the act, in the hope of reducing the ill feelings directed to the accused. **Differentiation** and **transcendence** attempt to lessen the negative affect associated with the act. **Attacking the accuser**, if the accuser is the injured party, may reduce the audience's sympathy to the injured party, thus reducing the perceptions of the severity of the harmful act. Compensation strategy reduces the perceived severity of the injury. If a person commits an offense, the offender may regret it. The audience may forgive a person who assure them that whatever she/he has done he/she will take **corrective action**. This may be a promise not to repeat the mistake. Lastly, a person who engages in **mortification** (an apparently sincere apology, expression of regret, request for forgiveness) may salvage a damaged image. These actions can restore partially, the actor's face. The workings of many of the image restoration strategies can be explained through an analysis of the important nature of reproaches or attacks. An attack must portray an act in an unfavorable light and attribute responsibility for that act to the accused. Defenses attempt to rehabilitate a face by denying or lessening responsibility for that act.



### **3.15 TYPOLOGY OF IMAGE RESTORATION STRATEGIES**

Here, image restoration strategies are organized into five broad categories, three have subcategories: denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification.

#### **3.15.1 Denial**

Ware and Linkugel (1973) suggest that any person who is forced to defend himself or herself against the attacks of others has several options. He/she may deny performing the wrongful act. Goffman (1971) observes that the accused may deny the act occurred or that the accused committed it. Schonbach (1980) suggests that one may claim the failure event didn't occur. Schlenker (1980) lists innocence as an option. Tedeschi and Reiss (1981) discuss denial of agency, and Semin and Manstead (1983) mention mistaken identity as a defensive option. Whether the accused denies that the undesirable act actually occurred or denies that he/she performed it, either option if accepted, should set the actor free of blame. One strategy for dealing with attacks is to deny the undesirable action. It's possible to reinforce one's denial. E.g., after a tape was used to prove that PLO leader Yasser Arafat made derogatory comments about Jews, he claimed that the recording was fabricated ("Arafat says", 1992). Here Arafat denied the charge while explaining the apparently incriminating evidence. A well-known defense strategy in criminal trial is the alibi. Here a witness testifies that the accused was elsewhere at the time of the crime and hence cannot have committed the crime. Burke (1970) discusses victimage or shifting the blame, and Schonbach (1980) suggests that a form of refusal is applying guilt to another person. This strategy can be considered a variant of denial, because the accused cannot have committed the offensive act if someone else did it.

#### **3.15.2 Evading responsibility**

People who are unable to deny performing the wrongful act may be able to reduce their apparent responsibility for it. Four different strategies can be identified. Scott and Lyman's (1968) version of scapegoating, renamed provocation here suggest that the actor may claim that the act in question is performed in response to another wrongful act, which



understandably provoked the offensive act in question. If the other person agrees that the actor was provoked, the provocateur may be held responsible instead of the actor. A second strategy for evading responsibility is defeasibility (Scott & Lyman, 1968), plead lack of information about or control over important factors in the situation. Schonbach (1980), Tedeschi & Reiss (1981), and Semin & Manstead (1983) identify a number of variants of defeasibility. Instead of denying that the act occurred, the actor attempts to suggest that lack of information, volition, or ability means that he/she shouldn't be held fully responsible for the act. Third strategy is that an actor may make an excuse based on accidents (Scott & Lyman (1968), Tedeschi & Reiss (1981) or Semin & Manstead (1983)). We hold others responsible only for factors they can control. E.g., when people are late to a meeting, we may not hold them completely responsible if unforeseeable traffic congestion caused their delay. Rather than denying that the offensive act occurred, the accused attempts to provide information that may reduce his/her apparent responsibility for the wrongful act. In the fourth possibility, the actor suggests that performance of the undesirable act may be justified on the basis of motives or intentions (discussed by Ware & Linkugel, 1973, as part of denial). The undesirable act isn't denied, the audience is asked not to hold the actor fully responsible because it was done with good, rather than evil intentions.

### **3.15.3 Reducing offensiveness**

A person accused of a wrongful act may attempt to reduce the degree of ill feeling experienced by the audience. This approach to image restoration has six variants: bolstering, minimization, differentiation, transcendence, attacking their accusers, and compensation. They're explained briefly below.

#### **3.15.3.1 Bolstering**

Ware & Linkugel (1973) may be used to mitigate the negative effects for the rhetor. Here the wrong-doer relate positive attributes they possess or positive actions they have performed in the past. While the amount of guilt from the accusation remain the same, increasing positive feeling toward the actor may help offset the negative feeling toward the act, yielding an improvement in the actor's image.



### **3.15.3.2 Minimization**

Here the accused attempts to minimize the amount of negative affect associated with the offensive act. If the accused can convince the audience that the negative act isn't as bad as it might first appear, the amount of ill feeling associated with that act is reduced. To the extent this strategy is successful, the person's face is restored. Sykes & Matza (1957), Scott & Lyman (1968), Schonbach (1980), Schlenker (1980), Tedeschi & Reiss (1981), and Semin & Manstead (1983), they all discuss denial or minimization of injury and victimage as accounting strategies.

### **3.15.3.3 Differentiation**

Differentiation is another strategy for minimizing the offensiveness of an act (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). The offender attempts to distinguish the act performed from other similar but less desirable action. When he/she compares them, his/her undesirable act may appear less offensive. This may have the effect of reducing the audience's negative feeling toward the wrongful act and the actor.

### **3.15.3.4 Transcendence**

Again, the actor can also employ transcendence (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). This strategy places the act in a different context. Ware & Linkugel (1973) discuss placing the action in a broader context, but it can also be useful to suggest a different frame of reference. E.g., Robin Hood might suggest that his actions be viewed not as theft but as assistance to the poor and downtrodden. A person accused of wrongful act might direct our attention to other allegedly higher values, to justify the behavior in question (Sykes & Matza, 1957; Scott & Lyman, 1968; Schonbach, 1980; Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi & Reiss, 1981; and Semin & Manstead, 1983), all discuss appeal to values or higher loyalties or both as justification strategies. E.g., a police officer could attempt to justify illegally planting evidence on a defendant as the only way to protect society from a dangerous but clever criminals.



### **3.15.3.5 Attacking the accusers**

At times those accused of wrongful act attack their accusers as Rosenfield 1968; Sykes & Matza, 1957; Scott & Lyman, 1968; Schonbach, 1980; and Tedeschi & Reiss, 1981) suggest. If the credibility of the source of accusation can be lessened, the damage to one's reputation from those accusations may be diminished. If the accuser is also the victim of the offensive act the apologist may create the impression that the victim deserved what befell him/her, attacking the accuser may reduce the perceived undesirable action (Semin & Manstead, 1983) and improving the rhetor's face. Attacking one's accuser may divert the audience's attention away from the original accusation, and lessen the damage to the rhetor's face.

### **3.15.3.6 Compensation**

It's the last strategy for lessening the offensiveness of an action (Schonbach, 1980). The person offers to remunerate the victim to help offset the negative feeling arising from an offensive act. This redress may take the form of valued goods or services as well as monetary reimbursement. Compensation functions as a bribe. If the accuser accepts the proffered inducement, and if it has enough value, the negative affect from the offensive act may be outweighed, restoring image.

### **3.15.4 Corrective action**

Here the accused promises to correct the problem. This may take two forms: restoring the situation to the state of affairs before the objectionable action and promising to "mend ones ways" and make changes to prevent the recurrence of the wrongful act. If the problem is one that could recur the actor's position may be enhanced by assuring that changes will prevent it from happening again.

Goffman (1971) names this possibility a component of an apology. The difference between this strategy and compensation is that corrective action addresses the actual source of injury (offering to rectify past damage and prevent its recurrence), while compensation consists of a gift designed to counterbalance, rather than to correct the offence.



### 3.15.5 Mortification

The accused may admit responsibility for undesirable act and ask for forgiveness, engaging in mortification (Burke, 1970, 1973). If we believe the apology is sincere, we may pardon the offensive act. Schonbach (1980) and Goffman (1971) discuss concessions, in which one may admit guilt and express regret. The rhetor who desires to restore an image through discourse have five basic options: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, correction and mortification. Several of these basic strategies have variants.

A “strategy” is an abstract or general concept that represents a goal or an effect sought by discourse. Strategies are thus abstract representations of the relationship between discourse and goals or effects. Strategy represents the discursive intersection between goals sought by a rhetor and effects that may occur in an audience. Utterances may immediately achieve a goal sought by the rhetor (consummatory) or utterances may create effects that are means to achieve a further goal (instrumental). E.g., bolstering is most often a **consummatory strategy**: the point of discourse designed to bolster is to influence the audience to have a more favorable impression of the source. Once this source’s impression has been bolstering, the discourse has succeeded in accomplishing its goals. Shifting the blame is better viewed as an **instrumental strategy**. The effect of (successfully) shifting the blame is to damage other person’s image. The ultimate goal sought by shifting the blame is to exonerate the source. Thus, this strategy may be viewed as a two-step process: Firstly, the accused is blamed for the reprehensible act (the blame is shifted), then, it is hoped, the audience will exonerate the source, restoring the source’s face. This strategy achieves an immediate effect when the other person is held accountable for the despicable act, it may or may not achieve its ultimate (instrumental) effect. If the audience aggresses that the target should be blamed but continues to hold the source responsible too, this strategy would be judged a failure, because it failed to exonerate the source (even if it succeeded in blaming the target). When it works as intended, shifting the blame first achieves a preliminary effect (the target is held responsible for the wrongful act), and it accomplishes the ultimate effect (the source is cleared of blame).

A given utterance can have both consummatory and instrumental qualities,, serving more than one strategy. E.g., there are myriad ways to bolster one’s reputation. If a company



accused of harming the environment bolsters by discussing its programs of assisting the poor or supporting the fine arts, such discourse may function to bolster its face and would be consummatory. However, if that company chooses instead to enhance its face by touting its environment programs, this discourse may not only bolster the company's reputation (consummatory) but also reinforce the company's denial that it had caused environmental problems. The later strategy can be considered instrumental because bolstering only indirectly denies the charges.

In the same way, one may attempt to defuse charges by attacking one's accuser. Attacking one's accuser may be viewed as an instrumental strategy, because if the credibility of one's accuser can be lessened, the damage to one's face should be mitigated as well (an instrumental effect). In some circumstances it may be possible to shift the blame for the reprehensible act to one's accuser. Such an utterance, then, would function both to attack one's accuser and to shift the blame. In this instance, both strategies are instrumental.

Strategies in discourse can be operationalized in multitude ways, which can make it difficult to identify them. Clues that an analyst may use to try to identify an utterance as an instance of a strategy are as follow:

The critic may work from the rhetor's perspective, considering the rhetorical problem facing the rhetor and speculating about how an utterance might have been intended by the rhetor to resolve that problem. The critic may take the audience's perspective and speculate about how the auditors might react to a given utterance in that situation. Furthermore, at times the rhetor might give clues in the discourse that help classify an utterance (e.g., the first part of the utterance "Let me tell you why this problem isn't so bad: it only happens in an unusual set of circumstances that rarely occur" – might be taken as an indication that the speaker is trying to minimize the problem). It may not be possible to identify a given utterance with absolute certainty, but using one or more clues allows critics to make reasonable arguments about the classification of utterances as instances of these strategies.



### 3.16 IMAGE RESTORATION AND THE AUDIENCE

This section deals with perceptions. The actor responds to perceived threats to his/her character. The attacks are important to the actor when they're believed to reduce the rhetor's image in the eyes of a group (audience) who is salient to the rhetor. The rhetor's perceptions of the audience's reputation of the rhetor may or may not correspond directly to the audience's actual perceptions of the rhetor's face. The rhetor's perceptions of the audience's reaction to attacks are all the rhetor has available to prompt and guide image restoration efforts. When trying to understand the rhetor's perception of an response to an attack, critics must consider the rhetor's point of view, the rhetor's perceptions of the audience's beliefs.

There are two "audiences" for a given image restoration attempt. An **external audience**, which consists of those for whom the accused is most concerned with restoring his/her face. There are three possibilities for external audience. Firstly, it may consist of the person who objected to the apologist's behavior. E.g. if Mary criticizes her husband Joe, Joe may wish to restore Mary's impression of (and be concerned only with Mary's perceptions of him). Here, the rhetor is trying to restore an image with the accuser. Secondly, Pat may criticize Chris in front of several co-workers, and Chris may wish to repair Pat's perception as well as the perceptions of the other co-workers aware of Pat's charges. In this case, the rhetor is trying to restore face with the accuser and others aware of the accusation. The last form of external audience occurs when a third party levels the charges before the relevant group. E.g., if an activist protests against a company, that company spokesperson may wish to reassure customers but be completely unconcerned about whether the protester is convinced by the image restoration effort.

In the third case, the rhetor is more concerned with restoring face with those aware of the accusations than with the accuser. A failure event presumably makes the rhetor feel badly. In a certain sense we can consider the rhetor himself/herself to be a second audience and the accounts and excuses he/she verbalizes may or may not succeed in making the rhetor feel better about her or himself.



### 3.17 THE RELATIONSHIP OF ATTACK AND DEFENSE

Ryan (1982) emphasizes the importance of understanding image restoration events in the context of the specific attacks provoking the face repair work. How does the theory of image restoration discourse that attacks?

Ryan (1982:254) asserts that “the critic cannot have a complete understanding of accusation or apology without treating them both”. He states that there are two types of accusations and three stases of fact which are: definition, quality, and jurisdiction, he doesn’t discuss the relationship between accusation and defense. E.g., the apologist may or may not respond to some or all of the attacks. It may appear obvious that the rhetor who ignores specifics of the attack cannot hope to be successful, but closer analysis suggests this isn’t always the case.

Firstly, it’s possible to redefine the attack. E.g., Huzman and Linkugel (1988) argue that Huey Long attempts to shift policy accusation from General Hugh Johnson’s *kategoria* into character accusations, which were easier for him to handle. If the rhetor successfully transforms the accusations, he/she will not respond to them as they were originally developed.

Instead of altering the nature of the accusations, the apologist may attempt to refocus attention on other issues entirely (as Reagan attempted to shift attention away from the arms deal (Heisey, 1988) explains. This maneuver doesn’t always work, it may work only for a time, but it’s a possibility. If successful in reorienting the audience’s attention, the rhetor may well be able to successfully ignore some or all of the accusations. It’s possible that all aspects of the accusations may not be equally important to the audience. So, it may be important to the accused not to respond to all attacks but to concentrate on those most salient to the audience.

It’s also possible that there is no clear accusation. The accusation can arise generally in the media, for example, rather than from a rhetor’s explicit *kategoria*. Several analyses have suggested that attack and defense can become intertwined. This seems likely in a series of exchanges, such as in a political campaign. It may be inappropriate to label one discourse “the *kategoria*” or attack and the other “the *apologia*” or defense. One of the image



restoration strategies suggested here is attacking one's accuser(s). Whenever this situation occurs, there would be elements of attack and defense in at least one of the key discourses and quite possibly in all of them. The strategies outlined here may work well with preemptive apologia, in which the rhetor attempts to defuse anticipated criticism. Here the defense would occur before the attack, complicating the relationship between *kategoria* and *apologia*. A persuasive attack consists of two basic elements: an offensive act is indicated, and the target of the attack must be held responsible for that act. If the act isn't perceived as offensive, no damage to the target's image should occur. If the accused isn't responsible for the act, again no damage to the target's reputation should occur.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **INTERPERSONAL ACCOUNTS**

#### **4.1 ACCOUNTS IN RESPONSE TO STRESS**

##### **4.1.1 Definition, scope and historical notes**

An account is like a story that contains an array of plots, characters, and patterns of interaction. It contains explanations and descriptive material for events about self and others. Random House Dictionary (1978) defines an account as “1. a description of events or facts; 2. an explanatory statements”.

Work on accounts has historical roots. The concept was first introduced by the sociologists who discussed accounts in terms of excuses made by people when they're associated with undesirable act.

The concept of account was first introduced to psychology by Weiss in his influential book *Marital Separation* (1975). Weiss's analysis suggests that the account-making process may play a restorative role in grief work after loss.

##### **4.1.2 Basic characteristics**

Component activities of the account-making process according to Weiss (1975) are cognitive work of remembering, analyzing, searching one's mind and the development of subsidiary activities such as affective reactions and behavioral expectations.

It also involves discussion with others, soliciting their response to the story, or using them as sounding-boards for a monologue. It is suggested that accounts are the same as the photo albums. They are often compartmentalized and assist us to organize our memories and understanding of important happenings and eras, and the significant others with whom we were involved as those periods of time unfolded. E.g., we may have an account for each era in photographs. Accounts may be organized according to our recollection of these significant



others and relevant happenings concerning them, and our interpretation of their meaning in the larger picture of our lives. This organization may be called the compartmentalization of accounts.

The account-maker may have master account which organizes these more specific accounts. Gergen and Gergen (1988) refer this concept as “macro-narrative”. The macro-narrative refers to a person’s overall life-story and “micro-narrative” refers to accounts of brief incidents.

Accounts correspond partially to what Kelly (1983) refers to as perceived causal structure. In Kelley’s conception, a perceived causal structure pertains the chains of causes that people often employ in understanding events. One cause is seen to lead to an effect which itself becomes the cause for a further effect, etc. Several causes may also be seen as jointly determining one effect, or a given cause may give rise to several various effects. Or circular causality may be inferred. Accounts may be sharply etched, dramatic, powerful, highly coherent, and complete. Sometimes they are like meanderings, erratically pieced-together fragments of meaning regarding central events and people on our psychic stages. They are all we have in terms of our own life-stories, or the overall master-story. Warren (1989) suggests that a story isn’t an image of life, but it’s life in motion, specifically the presentation of individual characters moving through conflict particular experiences, dealing with some conflict or problem, and searching for a resolution. Warren argues that if there isn’t conflict, there is no story. This section focuses on the mind’s quest to understand our major stresses: Why did my father abuse me? Why doesn’t she love me? Why am I so vulnerable to him? Why did I commit that act of cruelty to my wife?

A theme of this book is that account-making is important to the individual trying to come to terms psychologically with major personal loss, and to do something valuable as a consequence of the loss. It helps us cope and find meaning beyond loss, and it helps us give some of that hope and meaning to others who also suffer.

#### **4.1.3 The why’s of accounts: Motivations for account-making**

According to Warren (1989), accounts are learned in the same ways that people learn other social behavior: from parents, peers, and the media. Account-making is pronounced as a



way of dealing with the world for the young adult, when this person has begun to taste some of life's difficulties such as the pain of rejection in dating and social activity, and the crushing blow of defeat in athletic or academic performance. Such experiences forced us to try to understand them because in each domain we want to succeed. Story-telling derives from performing undesirable act, or from having to come to grips with difficult, even traumatic, personal circumstances. We turn to explanations provided by others e.g. peers, parents, friends and by the media. Example of that type of an account might be, "She won't go out with me because she is hung up on six-foot-tall hunks who play in the football team". This helps to ease the pain a little and gets us back on our feet to try again.

We learn and develop and refine our explanations in their story form, and we also may learn tentatively and selectively to discuss them with others. The present authors believe that much of the contents of our account-making about close relationships are acquired in the relationship talk that we participate in and that we overhear in conversations among our friends an family, and on the television. It also appears that women engage in such talk more intensively and regularly than do men.

According to Munroe and Jacobson (1985:18), men sometimes also engage in this type of talk, and even if they don't do so, they're likely to engage in degrees of relationship-talk as often as women engage in this more private account-making. In the same way, it seems that both men and women learn how to talk about other kinds of dilemma and trauma in their lives directly and vicariously from those who have experienced such difficulties.

According to Munroe and Jacobson (1985:18), motivations of accounts includes:

- (i) Quest for control and understanding.
- (ii) Self-esteem maintenance and enhancement.
- (iii) Emotional purging.
- (iv) The search for closure: The Account as an End in Itself.
- (v) Enlightened Feeling and Enhanced Will and Hope.



#### **4.1.3.1 Quest for control and understanding**

Weiss (1975) discusses the value of accounts for the grieving married person who had recently experienced marital separation. A principal motivation of the newly separate individual in trying to cope with the emotion and loss is to have a greater sense of understanding of why the relationship ended and of personal control over the situation and the future. Account-making make events that seemed to offer little coherence during their unfolding to seem more understandable. Example, "I should have guessed all along that he was seeing someone else. How could I have been so stupid?" Even if such lines sounds like old refrains in our world, as part of fuller stories they help give the account-maker a greater sense of understanding of a traumatic event and also a perception that in the future he or she will have more control because of this greater understanding. The account-maker is always more in control than the actor who doesn't have an account available. The actor should feel more in control of personal events to such an extent that he/she has a repertoire of accounts for the types of events being experienced. We have to become story-tellers to know that we can face with more confidence and resolve the future and its many perils for our happiness.

#### **4.1.3.2 Self-esteem maintenance and enhancement**

According to Cross (1986), self-esteem is a fragile commodity in our lives as social beings. It can be easily damaged, sometimes almost beyond repair. So, we exhibit a lot of effort and spend a lot of time trying to hold constant or bolster our sense of self-worth. Sometimes we do so via the accounts we tell ourselves and others. Cross (1986) suggests that people often gain a greater sense of personal importance in the world by fitting events they observe into stories they know. She also notes the power conveyed to the writer or diarist of the story: "until she ... writes down whatever happened, turns it into a story, it hasn't really happened, it hasn't shape, form, reality. I think so many women keep diaries and journals in the hope of giving some shape to their inchoate lives" (Cross, 1986:35).

Weary and Arkin (1981) argue that the account-maker often presents his/her accounts both to others in conversation and writing, and to self via private reflections in a way designed to enhance or protect self-esteem. They do not differentiate between private and public self-esteem, as has been done in the attribution literature. Jones and Pittma (1982) theorize



about different presentation tactics that people use in various situations. E.g., people may ingratiate themselves with others, sometimes they self-promote, or they're supplicants etc. In each of these tactical presentations, the personal story may be a key aspect of the strategy. A man may tell a prospective new lover that his wife left him and their good marriage because of her need to experience new relationships. In telling this story, he may suggest to the potential lover that he would be a good lover who wouldn't be unfaithful, and he may imply that he needs her to ease this undeserved pain. In the same way, a woman reporting to a male friend that "I'd say to myself, 'My husband is right. I'm sure a terrible person. I'm such a bitch ... no one will ever want me again ...'" may in effect be soliciting the male friend's affections so as to dissuade herself from the view that she will never have another lover.

While there's a glaring paucity of research on this interface of self-presentation and account-making, their reasoning here suggests that people frequently select a particular account depending on who is listening. The audience's receptiveness and reaction must be anticipated and the reported account tailored accordingly. E.g., a same sex friend may elicit an account that blames other and exonerates self. Weiss (1975) notes that after a separation, members of a parting couple may have to agree on who gets custody of which friends. On the other hand, an opposite-sex potential lover may elicit a mixture of self-promotion and supplication because the account-maker isn't sure which presentation will be better received.

A further implication of this argument is that an account-maker may frequently be confused as to the truth of any particular account one may have presented so many different versions that one has now forgotten the story first believed most strongly. From the perspective of psychobiography, Runyan (1982) suggests that there is no such thing as a definitive biography because lives are more complex, and many different perspectives can be brought to bear in reporting on any one's life. This view seems tenable when considering a person's account of his/her own life. The reported account is almost always designed to have an enhancing or restorative effect on self-worth.



#### **4.1.3.3 Emotional purging**

People sometimes use accounts to cleanse themselves of unpleasant emotional states that have built up in the grieving process. Rosenblatt (1983) provides the best example of this motivation in the book *Bitter, Bitter, Tears*. In this book, he presents a searching analysis of grief work among nineteenth-century diarists whose thoughts and feelings have been elicited from their personal diaries. Separation during that century often occurred as a result of a loved one's migration in search of work, or as a result of early death due to disease. Grieving in the form of diary-reporting relieves the individual of part of the continuing emotional attachment to the lost loved one, it facilitates the natural detachment process. It helps dull the pain and ease the burden. It may also help the account-maker to feel less responsible or guilt for the loss, whether or not responsibility or guilt are in anyway appropriate. Emotional purging is undertaken to relieve oneself of emotional pain. Account-making in bereavement isn't a self-presentation whose primary concern is audience reaction. It's a pure form of grieving and releasing or letting go.

#### **4.1.3.4 The search for closure: The account as an end in itself**

People use accounts in order to seek mental closure of events, or as an end in itself. Weber, Harvey and Stanley (1987) argue that the importance of closure cannot be underestimated in terms of psychological tranquility. Zeigarnik (1938) demonstrates that an individual who were prevented from finishing stories they had been reading had a greater and more detailed recall of those stories than did individuals who had been allowed to finish reading. Those who had finished reading their stories mentally filed them away and forgot about them. According to the Zeigarnik effect, we are disturbed by loose ends, we don't like not knowing how something turned out.

Developing and relating to our own accounts of our relational experiences allows us to tie up any loose ends that might have been left hanging. Closure in accounts may provide the stability we need and seek. Closure in our accounts may be the only kind of closure we can successfully obtain and realize at the time. We always seek closure, and we aren't satisfied until we have reached it in some form. An account gives us closure not only in documenting



how a relationship ended, but in fact that the relationship ended. An account may be an end in itself.

#### **4.1.3.5 Enlightened feeling and enhanced will and hope**

Accounts are told and re-told because they enlighten and give the account-maker the will and hope to carry on. This motive may be seen as superordinate to the other motives discussed above. E.g., it subsumes and is different from emotional purging because it strongly represents a positive, uplifting experience, while purging may represent a release of negative feeling toward others or the central event. It subsumes and is different from ego-enhancement, since it involves a broader motivation that might involve a desire to contribute to others in a relatively selfless way. Myerhoff (1978), in *Number Our Days*, provides a penetrating report and analysis of the lives and struggles of a group of elderly Jewish immigrants living in Los Angeles. She relates how they regularly tell stories of their former lives as a way of giving continuity to their shared cultural traditions and belief systems. To us, this activity appears to represent well the motivation of enlightened feeling and enhanced will and hope. Myerhoff concludes her book with the observation that humans basically are *homo narrans*, humankind as story-teller. By this phrase, she seems to imply that in any culture the very fabric of meaning that constitutes every person's existence is the story we tell about ourselves.

#### **4.1.4 The when's of accounts**

Accounts are developed after the problematic event is over or after its early impact if its effects continue. Anonymously quoted opening epigraph, the general and figurative answer to when do we develop accounts is when there is a "fall from perfection" or, in more psychological terms, when an event of such magnitude as to shake a person's reality or even self-identity occurs. Specifically, it has been reported that attributional activity occurs more often under negative than positive mood states (Schwarz & Clore, 1983) and for negative outcomes versus positive outcomes (Harvey & Smith, 1977).



#### 4.1.5 The who's of accounts

Anyone who grieves develops accounts. Up to so far, no work has been done on possible personality correlates of account-making, such work may be productive. Given an evidence, it's now possible to say that women are both more active in their account-making than are men and the more adroit of the sexes in effectively expressing feelings in accounts. This evidence has been suggested by early work in the relationship literature using free response measures of people's thoughts and feelings about conflict and separation (e.g. Weiss, 1975; Hill, Rubin & Peplau, 1976; Orvis, Kelley and Butler, 1976; Harvey, Wells & Alvarex, 1978). These findings are consistent with the frequent observations that women are more articulate and expressive about their feelings or analyses of close relationships, or that they clearly think and feel about relationships to a greater degree than do men. This gender difference may be changing over time, as men are encouraged in their socialization to be more expressive and analytical about their close relationships.

Recent work on the application of attribution theory to marital distress suggests a more complex picture of men and women in distressed relationships. Munroe & Jacobson (1985) report that, while women in distressed relationships engage in considerable attributional analysis throughout the relationship, men start to analyze in this way mostly when major problems begin to surface in the relationship. They conclude that men's attributional activities in such relationship may serve as a barometer of the status of the relationship, when they finally do begin to search for an understanding of what's wrong, it's already too late.

#### 4.1.6 The how's of accounts

According to Duck (1988),

- accounts may be verbalized to others.
- Or they may be written in the form of diaries or other personal records.
- They may be manifest in all forms of art and symbolic representation, from poetry and art to ancient Egyptian and other cultures' pictography and hieroglyphics.
- By reporting accounts via conversation. Such activity occurs most often in talk between close friends, lovers and family members. People tend to report fragments of



accounts to strangers in particular settings, such as the conversations that frequently develop between passengers on airplanes.

- Type of social setting is an important determinant both of when and how accounts are reported and how personal relationships develop in general and merits more attention by researchers in this field (Altman, 1989; Altman & Werner, 1985).
- Accounts may be developed in one's own thoughts. E.g., the obsessive review of an ended relationship in Weiss's (1975) work. A fragmentary type of account-making appears to be pervasive in the waking thoughts of many people. It may be compelled by nagging worries, unresolved mental turmoil conflict about decisions to be made or whatever, it's a frequent companion for most of us at one time or another. Intrapsychic account-making may also be mindless tasks, which induce one to daydream and develop stories of desired happenings in one's imagination. Burnett, McGhee and Clarke (1987) state that accounts may be displayed or manifested in different ways, from written and spoken words, to private thoughts, to overt actions including highly symbolic ones.

#### **4.1.7 Methodology**

According to Gergen and Davis (1985) and Cochran (1986), accounts have been studied using quantitative and qualitative approaches. Qualitative approaches have evolved from several schools of thought, including dramatism, ethnomethodology, ethogeny, and social constructivism. Masheter and Harris (1986) report a case study qualitative approach, which appears promising. In their technique, couples engaged in close relationships are asked to choose and reconstruct a scene complete with the lines of dialogue, which represents a recurring pattern in their relationship. Within each scene reported, the authors attempt to trace the participants' stories line by line, interpretation by interpretation, similar to the process of coding a video record.

In the next approach, Baxter and Wilmot (1985) report a study using an ethnographic interview to solicit informant accounts (similar as did Myerhoff, 1978). These accounts pertained to events in an opposite-sex relationship in which the informants were involved. Open-ended interviews were used to obtain the accounts. Via a method of analytic induction (Bulmer, 1979), basic categories of taboo topics were developed from 172 overall topics.



Bulmer's approach involves forming categories for taboo topics which in this study were based on a subsample of protocols deriving the interviews. The research revealed which topics were considered to be taboo in the relationships in question, and the informants' reasons for considering them so.

Antaki (1989) has provided one of the most ambitious new approaches to the study of aspects of accounts and more generally to the investigation of structures of causal beliefs. Following Toulmin's (1958) structure of argument method, Antaki's technique invites respondents to write causes for a controversial event on cards and arrange the cards so as to describe the interrelationships among the causes. The respondent then reproduces the pattern as a diagram, drawing arrows between causes and effect. Lastly, the respondent defends each link made in the diagrammed network. Antaki has found that this approach produces different but highly systematic structures of beliefs and linkages depending upon the respondents' prior beliefs about the issue in question.

#### **4.1.8 Accounts and account-making in various literatures**

##### **4.1.8.1 A diversity of relevant works**

The following are several relevant works that show how widely accounts and account-making are used as a centerpiece technique in writing for the general public.

Hunt's (1969) *The Affair: A Portrait of Extra-Marital Love in Contemporary America* provides a gripping analysis of extra-marital relations at that historical point in the United States, and in so doing used people's accounts reflecting on their own extra-marital affairs. Abramson's (1984) *Sarah: A Sexual Biography* reports on the sexual life and development of a young woman from college student to prostitute to middle-class wife and mother. Schuchter's (1986) *Dimensions of Grief* focuses on people's attempts to cope with loss of loved ones. Rubin's (1983) *Intimate Strangers* analyses men's and women's attempts to forge closeness in the midst of imposing dilemmas of changing times of values and identities. Vaughan's (1986) *Uncoupling* reports evidence on people's perceptions of the crucial turning-points in the failing of their close relationship. Lawson's (1988) *Adultery: An Analysis of Love and Betrayal* presents case studies of adultery in marriage, and analyzes the psychological



dynamics involved. Writers use accounts to demonstrate that people search for meaning and purpose in their lives.

Bruner (1987, 1989), states that aspects of culture provide a fertile ground for studying how people assign meaning to their lives and present their lives as narrative.

#### **4.1.8.2 Review of relevant scholarly literature**

According to Harvey, Weber and Orbuch (1990), accounts are defined as interpretations and expressions in story form. Accounts like conceptions have an extensive history.

Burke's (1945) concept of grammars of motives is the same as Mills' (1940) idea and our own view of accounts in the sense that it refers to words, phrases and clauses that people use to justify action. Snyder and Wicklund suggest that attributors can readily make inferences that enhance their sense of control. Accounts may be viewed as related to Osgood's (1962) emphasis on judgement. Judgement, in this approach, involves comparison of experience against some abstract dimension or against one's imagination. Osgood suggested that across cultures, people engage in a meaning search involving judgemental activities.

#### **4.1.8.3 First explicit treatments**

The accounts concept was first stated in detail by a cadre of sociologists. The writings of Goffman (1959, 1971), Garfinkel (1956, 1967), and Scott and Lyman (1968; Lyman and Scott, 1970) were at the forefront of this theoretical development. Goffman (1971) states that when a person committed a wrongful act, there is a need to provide an account in order to neutralize that wrongful act. Offenses must be explained in order for an interrupted flow of conversation to resume. Scott and Lyman (1968:46) define the accounts as "a linguistic device employed whenever an action is subjected to evaluative inquiry". Scott and Lyman disagree that there are two types of accounts which are justifications or excuses about undesirable actions. It may be concluded from their analysis that motivation for such accounts is protection of self-esteem or social status. Excuses in this conception are statements used to relieve the actor of responsibility are occurring in the forms of:



- Appeal to accidents;
- Defeasibility;
- Biological drives; and
- Scapegoating.

Scott and Lyman (1968) contend that justifications are socially approved vocabularies that neutralize an act or its consequences.

They noted four types of justification: (i) Denial of injury; (ii) Denial of victim (that is, that the victim deserved the harm); (iii) Appeal to loyalties (that is, that the actor was acting in the interests of the victim); and (iv) Condemnation of condemners. E.g., of a justificatory account in the form of an appeal to loyalties is this statement by a mentally ill patient: "I was going to night school to get an M.A. degree, and holding down a job in addition, and the load got too much for me" (Scott & Lyman, 1968:52).

#### **4.1.8.4 Varied strands of related work in 1970s and 1980s**

Three early follow-up refinements on Scott and Lyman's (1968) position are: (i) Prus's (1975) discussion of the many tactics of resistance that people may use against attributions of responsibility for a failure event; (ii) A subdivision of justifications by Harré (1977) which differentiated between the intelligibility and the warrantability of actions and discussed corresponding strategies of accounting; and (iii) Blumstein et al.'s (1974) experimental study, which evaluated conditions under which people will respect others' accounts. E.g. moral worth, as by a show of penitence, and the offender's control over the offense were found to be major determinants.

The review of related work emerged from the communication and social psychology literatures.

Scott and Lyman's (1968) treatment emphasizes accounts as given in talk. A recent treatment which focuses on talk and analyzes excuses and justifications given by people in different social settings is provided by Semin and Manstead (1983). They were concerned with the accountability of conduct. This means that people should be responsible for their actions.



When these actions are thought to be questionable (involving as they term it, “fractured social interaction”), an individual involved in an offensive act is forced to provide an account. In this framework, actions that correspond to social expectations aren’t called into question and hence do not lead to account-making.

Semin and Manstead define an account as “an explanation of the actions that mitigates either the actor’s responsibility for the action or the questionability of the action” (Semin and Manstead, 1983:x). Like Scott and Lyman (1968), Jellison (1977) stresses social justification as the key motivation for the presentation of account like material. Snyder, Higgins and Stucky (1983) suggest that people employ different excuses to maintain self-esteem. These include retrospective excuses which are most relevant to accounts. A retrospective excuse involves reconstructing the past to make oneself appear more appealing.

According to Folkes (1982), another form of excuse-making having relevance to brief accounting is providing excuses for rejecting overtures for social engagements. Folkes has provided data on the typical excuses college students make for rejecting date offers, showing people’s tendency to avoid attributions to other’s personal qualities and to emphasize situational problems, such as need to study for an important exam. In the same way, Metts (1989) explore students’ free response descriptions of situations involving deception of a close relationship partner. She also found evidence of protective strategies especially among married individuals, who indicated that they had used deception on occasion in order to avoid threats to their spouse’s self-esteem.

According to Couch and Weiland (1986), the focus on social justification is also related to the social resource exchange literature of factors involved in viewing others accountable in exchange situations. But, the emphasis isn’t so much on the content of the holding of other accountable. Relatedly, Tetlock and Boettger (1989), have conducted an interesting strand of research which emphasizes the differential cognitive and judgemental effects of whether or not people feel that they’re publicly accountable for their actions. Schoenbach (1980), theorizes that the account sequence involves a failure event, a reproach, an account, and an evaluation. Schoenbach also provides an elaborate extension and refinement of Scott and Lyman’s (1968) taxonomy for account phrases.



According to Goffman (1959), and a compelling analysis by Greenwald (1980), they suggest that on many occasions, people are aware of their tactical activity. Greenwald suggests that people readily revise and fabricate personal history in the service of self-esteem and self-interest. It appears that people may engage in strategic planning which then structures account-making and related behavior (Berger, 1988).

#### **4.1.8.5 Accounting for relationships**

Burnett, McGhee and Clarke (1987), edit and publish the first volume of collected writings on account-making in close relationships. This volume reflects many of the themes discussed above, as well as a diversity of conceptions of accounts. The volume's contributors point to many directions for further inquiry. The editors themselves pose several important questions, like: How reflective are people in relationships (Burnett, 1987)? If they're not reflective, do they mainly move into account-making phases when problems emerge? How important are actual, practical, linguistic aspects of the situation in which accounts are given to the content and consequences of account-making (McGhee, 1987)? Do speakers sometimes create accounts on the spot, as it were to justify earlier claims, and do they then sometimes persuade themselves about the merit of their own accounts (McGhee, 1987)?

The last important direction for accounts research signaled in the Burnett et al. (1987) volume concerned methodology. Duck (1987) argues persuasively that this area of work should direct its prime focus on process variables and longer-term relationships between real people. Generally, Duck and colleagues have provide cogent analyses of the value of process analysis (emphasizing the **how** and **why** of relationship development) in the study of personal relationships (Duck & Sants, 1983; Duck, 1988).

#### **4.1.8.6 Comparison with work on narratives**

In the work of Harvey, Orbuch and Weber (1990), it is suggested that there is a similarity between theory and research on accounts and theory and research on narratives. In narratives, an individual tell his or her story orally. Gergen and Gergen (1987) suggested that the well-formed narrative possesses the following components:



- (i) The establishment of a goal state (e.g. an end-point of the story, such as “How I escaped death”);
- (ii) selection of events relevant to the goal state (e.g. the relevant acts regarding my escape);
- (iii) arrangement of events in chronological order;
- (iv) establishing causal linkages (e.g. “My escape, therefore, was due mostly to my own courage”); and
- (v) demarcation signs (e.g. openings such as “Have you heard this one?”, and conclusers such as “So now you know what happened”).

The value of order in narrative sequences is emphasized by Arntson & Droge (1987) in a study of the communication dynamics found in epilepsy self-help groups. They suggest that narrative order “A happened, then B” makes the events portrayed seem more understandable and the future more predictable for the narrator.

Gergen and Gergen (1987) suggest that people, in effect, use self-presentation tactics in telling their stories, which often have strongly positive or negative themes. If a couple in a close relationship state that they are experiencing frequent “highs” and “lows” in their relationship story, the Gergens imply that the couple would be showing the story-form of a romantic saga. The Gergens argue that stories are frequently changed by actors in accordance with circumstances. They state, “the emerging love story may be abandoned when a worthy competitor arrives to make his/her bid for intimacy” (1987:285). The Gergens’ analysis is especially engaging regarding the nature and dynamics of close relationship narratives. However, as for their general argument, we would counter that account-making does not always involve telling one’s story to another in a narrative format, it may be done in writing or in private mental reflection and it may be fragmented and chaotic than the coherent patterning suggested by Gergen and Gergen (1987) for narratives.

In a more recent statement, Gergen and Gergen (1988) contend that furnishing an account is a behavior in the present that is a response to current circumstances. They reject the view that people carry with them fully elaborated narratives of all events that can be presented upon demand. Shotter (1984, 1987) has made valuable contributions to the literature on narratives and accounts. An idea that derives from his analysis is that accounts or narratives



are always constructed and are contextualized within larger explanatory systems. On the importance of the narrative Shotter says: "In my view it works retrospectively, to make some sense of what has happened so far, to gain hints as to what might happen next" (1987:233). In his analysis of accounts, Shotter (1984) has focused on how people talk about themselves and their behavior and, in general, make their conduct accountable in a moral world.

#### **4.1.8.7 Mainstream attribution work**

Harvey, Wells and Alvarez (1978) were among the first scholars to pursue the accounts topic in social psychology. This work was stimulated by Weiss's (1975) persuasive use of the concept in his study of marital separation. At that point, these attribution scholars focused in large part on the methodological advantage of allowing respondents to engage in more elaborate responses. Accounts and account-making at that time, weren't having major interest and theoretical value in and of themselves. Accounts were seen as packages of attributions and descriptive material. In related attribution research, progress was made in developing techniques to measure attributions as free responses, or as relatively unsolicited activity (Harvey et al., 1980; Wong & Weiner, 1981). A timely and searching analysis of this early work in the context of the development of attribution approaches is provided by Hewstone (1989).

Recently, Read (1987) has provided an interesting knowledge-structure approach to causal reasoning that emphasizes people's roles as storytellers and story-understanders. In these roles, Read argues that people take sequences of actions and integrate them into a coherent, plausible scenario. People do so via the drawing of numerous inferences based on detailed knowledge about people and the world.

Coming from the attribution tradition, Thompson and Janigian (1988) suggest that life schemata may provide a framework for understanding people's search for meaning. They say that a life schema is like a story with oneself as the protagonist. In their approach, a story has four basic elements: (i) a protagonist, is central character seen from the author's perspective; (ii) a plot, consists of problems to be overcome and goals that the protagonist wishes to attain; (iii) events that are relevant to these problems or goals; and (iv) a world-view, the author's usually unstated assumptions about how life operates (e.g. "People get



what they deserve", "God puts obstacles in your path to help you grow"). Each person's life schema involves each of these elements and their constituents. E.g., for the protagonist, one has a sense of personal ability and resources, feeling of personal control etc. Thompson and Janigian (1988) suggest that this concept of life schema links the two sides of meaningfulness, order provided by a stable world and self-view, and purpose provided by goals and likelihood they can be attained.

The last strand of work within the attribution literature that has relevance to accounts concerns people's perceptions of themselves as victims or the significant others of victims. An interesting question focused on attributions about the causes of a major harmful event in the life of the victim. An emerging literature on this topic reveals, e.g., that victims of undesirable life-events often experience loss of meaning, a need for discussion of the event with others, and persistent, intrusive ruminations concerning the event (Trait and Silver, 1989). Not all victims experience these severely debilitating symptoms, most victims experience some adjustment difficulties, and it's likely that some facet of account-making is central to their attempts to cope with the problem.

#### **4.1.8.8 The ethogenic position on accounts**

Harré and Secord (1972) and Harré (1979) have written influential treatises outlining "ethogenic psychology". They explain social behavior, emphasizing non-mechanistic models. They assume that production of skilled and competent action and the ability to provide accounts are grounded in cultural knowledge. Semin and Manstead (1983) challenge this view by arguing that tacit knowledge may play a role in account making, and that people may employ extemporaneously derived accounts in deference to the culturally-furnished explanations.

Harré, Clark and DeCarlo (1985), for example, assert that in producing their accounts, actors are displaying knowledge of the ideal ways of acting and ideal reasons for doing what they have done or omitted doing.



## **4.2 A THEORETICAL CONCEPTION OF ACCOUNT-MAKING IN RESPONSE TO SEVERE STRESS**

### **4.2.1 Introduction comments**

This section presents a theoretical conception of the role of account-making in response to severe stress. Account-making is one of the most promising approaches to coping with life's major stresses. Coles (1989) states that the ability to account for problematic events one observes is every person's universal gift or capacity of last resort.

This section presents a general commentary on severe stress as a research topic, a recent model of account-making under condition of severe stress (Harvey, Orbuch and Weber, 1990) and a related analysis of social-psychological processes associated with account-making. A central proposition of this section is that:

- Accounts matter;
- They empower our will and impassion our senses;
- They affect our thoughts, feelings and actions; and
- May readily be treated as independent as well as dependent variables in research studies.

### **4.2.2 The nature of severe stress and its study**

Traumatic-stress studies contain the investigation of the immediate and long-term psycho-social consequences of highly stressful events and the factors that affect those consequences. Traumatic stress incorporates other areas of study as: post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD), victimology, suicidology, stress and coping, disaster studies, bereavement studies, crisis intervention, stress management studies, learned-helplessness studies, and study of victims of rape, and abuse (Wilson, Harel and Kahana (eds.), 1988).

Monat and Lazarus (1977) define stress as any demand that disturbs homeostasis, and taxes a person's adaptive resources. Coping has been viewed as the successful reduction of stress. It re-establishes homeostasis in the cognitive appraisals made by the victim. The



psychological effects of severe stress may include: psychic numbing, anxiety, depression, intrusive unpleasant imagery, nightmares, exaggerated startle responses, disturbed sleep patterns, guilt, impaired concentration or memory, and fear and avoidance of situations that remind the individual of the stressful events. Social psychological effects may also be evident, such as interaction patterns that involve aggressive conduct or other dysfunctional and anti-social activity. An individual discloses very little. The effects may last a lifetime, or they may dissipate within months.

Lifton (1988) suggests that the traumatic syndrome can be defined as the state of being haunted by images that can neither be enacted nor cast aside, and that suffering is associated with being “stuck”.

Bergman and Jucovy (1982) have identified three ways of survivors react to Holocaust:

- (i) Living as if the Holocaust is still a current reality.
- (ii) An individual tries to repress the memories of the Holocaust; or
- (iii) Attempt to sublimate through writing and speaking about the Holocaust, to keep its memory alive.

#### **4.2.3 A theoretical model of account-making under severe stress**

Horowitz (1986) proposes that the normal phases of stress response syndromes involve a stressor event, a person's outcry involve emotional expression such as: panic, exhaustion, despair and hopelessness. In denial stage an individual try to avoid unwanted events. In working through stage, an individual try to work through the events that causes him or her stress by making the most intensive account making.

Marmar and Horowitz (1988) describe the individual who is succeeding at a working-through phase as growing in capacity to contemplate memories of the event, experience emotions, revise distorted meanings, and plan for the future. Completion phase represents success in working through the stressful event. It also implies learning and skill development based on the process of dealing with the stressor.



Pennebaker (1985, 1989) shows that trauma victims who haven't confided their traumatic experience and its personal consequences for them to close people are more likely to suffer from long-term physical problems as high blood pressure.

#### **4.2.4 Psychological processes associated with account-making**

##### **4.2.4.1 Affect**

According to Horowitz (1986) affect associated with account-making for highly disturbing events is that of intense negative feeling, or a feeling of lack of personal control. At the outcry stage, an individual has a feeling of loss, being overwhelmed by the events, feel sad and hopeless.

Kranzler (1988) states that children cope better and handle their grief effectively at the time and later as adults, if they had the opportunity and encouragement to talk about their feelings. Poems can be used to convey emotions.

##### **4.2.5 Memory-cognition**

When people make accounts, they remember the problematic events and they continue thinking about the events. Weiss (1975) outlines how people struggle to develop stories that provide them with a sense of control over the troubling events. The stories involve a description of the consequences and plans for coping. Those stories may have script-like qualities. Schank and Abelson (1977) define scripts as hypothesized structures that arrange a person's understanding, and guide performance. Scripts provide simple answers and action plans for problems.

The type of memorial trace in account-making Tulving (1983) has referred to as episodic memory, defined by the unique, concrete, personal experience dated in the rememberer's past. Most accounts consist of numerous episodic representations that people experience in flashbacks. Memorial part of accounts for events of stature in our lives contains many vivid memories. The essence of such memories stays with us until death. Bartlett (1932) states that the memory-cognition component of story-telling has the potential for reconstruction of



events. Robbe-Grillet (1986) observes that memory sometimes belongs to imagination, he states that memory is part of the imaginative process.

#### **4.2.6 Behavioral expectation**

Horowitz (1986) states that people form expectations about future behavior based on their accounts for the past, more especially at the final stages of completion and identity change in the stress-response sequence. Harvey et al. (1989) states that people's account of past relationships are related and they many determine future expectations for relationships.

#### **4.2.7 A future research agenda**

##### **4.2.7.1 When**

According to Horowitz (1986), the question is when will people engage most intensely in the account-making process? It is suggested that people will be highly involved in account-making associated with severely stressful events during the working-through stage of their reaction to the event. Account-making will also intensify when major transitions are possible (e.g. death of a parent, retirement, and mid-life crisis).

##### **4.2.7.2 Completeness**

Lewin's (1935) field theory states that flashbacks may play a role if completion hasn't take place. Berger (1979) suggests that people are involved in communication in order to predict and explain others' behavior so that their uncertainty about other's behavior is reduced by exchanging information.

##### **4.2.7.3 Who**

In terms of demographic or personality variables, or gender, people who are mostly engaged in account-making that address psychological and other problems are women (Holtzworth-Munroe & Jacobson, 1985; Ross, 1988).



#### **4.2.7.4 Themes**

There are few clues available in the literature of account-making about the different themes per types of event that people may exhibit. In the work of Harvey et al. (1986) on reports of vivid memories for past relationships, depression was positively related to rated vividness and unpleasantness of memories. This evidence suggests that people who are still having trouble coming to grips with previous stressful events may experience frequent instances of episodic recall.

Weiss (1975) states that common themes in marital separation and dissolution situation are justification and exoneration of self. The themes of "God's will" and luck of fortune are often reported by participants in these situations (Turnquist, Harvey & Anderson, 1988).

#### **4.2.7.5 Account-making and social interaction**

According to Town and Harvey (1981), college students who believed that another person preferred a homosexual lifestyle wrote more negative attributions about that person on an impression formation task and then also showed more avoidant non-verbal behavior when interacting with the person than did college students who believed that the other person had a heterosexual lifestyle.

People have a tendency to disclose to close friends or their lovers, and they disclose a little or not at all to strangers.

### **4.2.8 Person perception through accounts**

#### **4.2.8.1 Perceptions based on accounts**

Here the focus is on how the account-makers are perceived by others during account-making. The focus is also on how perception is affected by naturalistic and relatively complete story like construction (Jourard, 1971; Derlega, Wilson & Chaiken, 1976).



The research of the person-perception process associated with account-making adds to our knowledge of the account-making process in three ways:

- (i) The research of the person-perception process associated with account making facilitate our knowledge of people's naive psychology about the ascription of meaning (Heider, 1958).
- (ii) The investigation of the person-perception process associated with account-making facilitates movement of the investigation of account-making from the diary and strictly correlational approach to the experimental paradigm.
- (iii) Objects and situations' meaning is constructed through interaction with others (McCall and Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1981). Social perceptions are another way of gaining information about ourselves (Colley, 1902; Mead, 1934).

#### **4.2.8.2 Theoretical conception**

Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) articulate classes of variables that can influence persuasion. These classes of variables were associated with the speaker (e.g. credibility), the communication (e.g. qualities of the message such as fear appeal), and the audience (e.g. individual differences such as self-esteem). It is suggested that account-making may be divided into variables associated with account and how it is presented, the presenter of account, and the audience.

The major types of mediating processes are cognitive in nature and they include:

- (i) The audience's perceptions of the normativeness of the event or how likely an event is to occur in a given situation;
- (ii) Their empathy with the presenter and the predicament described;
- (iii) Their perceived similarity with the presenter or the extent they perceive that a similar event has occurred or could occur in their lives;
- (iv) Their perception of threat to self or personal values created by the event described; and
- (v) Their experience in relating to such presentation of accounts.



The main aspects of our conception of account-making and person perception:

### **Classes of important independent variables**

1. Qualities of the account and how it is presented.
2. Qualities of presenter.
3. Qualities of the audience.

### **Classes of important dependent variables**

1. Liking.
2. Trait inferences.

#### **4.2.8.2.1 Important processes theorized to mediate the independent-dependent variable relationships**

1. Audience's perception of normativeness of the event described.
2. Audience's degree of empathy with the presenter.
3. Audience's degree of perceived similarity with the presenter or their perception that the same event has occurred or could occur in their lives.
4. Audience's degree of perceived threat created by the events described.
5. Audience's degree of experience in relating to the events described.

#### **4.2.9 Empirical work**

An account that contain high distress produce greater liking for and more positive traits are ascribed to the presenter than an account containing low distress. Male and female perceivers would differ in their reaction to presenters depending on whether the presenter was a male or female, with greater empathy, and thus greater liking, exhibited by females in general (Rubin, 1983).



#### **4.2.10 Implications for the account-making literature**

Research of the person-perception process associated with account-making can help us add to our knowledge of the account-making process in important ways.

Perceivers react to the account-maker and arrive at inferences of dispositions and characteristics about the account-maker, given specific qualities of the account, the audience (gender), and the presenter (gender). Certain types of presented accounts may be more or less acceptable to perceivers depending on whether the stimulus person's behavior was or wasn't normative for the situation. The genders both of the perceiver and the account-maker seem to be important as they relate to the nature of the account. The content of our account, which we present to others can have wide ramification for how other people react and see us. The data are consistent with work by Lerner (1980), which has examined reactions and dispositions inferred to victims in terms of the world hypothesis.

#### **4.2.11 Future experimental directions**

The empirical work presented in this section suggests the importance of accounts person-perception experimental design. This research varies from past person-perception studies because it uses the account as the stimulus material. Person-perception study (Schneider, Hastorf and Ellsworth, 1979) use the stimulus scenario as a vehicle to examine another social psychological concept such as, how physically attracted the respondent is to the stimulus person, or how willing the respondent is to provide social support to the stimulus person. The present research uses a rich, personal, historical statement, explain in detail and naturalistic sentiments.

Limitations to the first two experiments:

1. These empirical studies have investigated only two qualities of an account:
  - (a) The absence or presence of distress following a relationship dissolution.
  - (b) The evidence of fidelity or infidelity.



Real-life account contains many other qualities in addition to those investigated here that may affect how the account-maker is perceived and reacted to by the recipient of the account.

2. These studies examined only one quality of both the audience and the presenter-gender. Future research should explore other qualities of the audience and the presenter that many influence how we perceive and react to account-makers, such as their ages (Coupland et al., 1988) and credibility of the presenter and audience. Future research should include experimentation in which respondents react to account-makers who are their friends, intimate partners etc., as well as report on their judgements and reactions to account-makers who are strangers.
3. Actual person-to-person interaction with the stimulus person is lacking in the present research.
4. The foregoing experiments haven't attempted to answer the question of how accounts or behaviors may change as a function of the reaction of others.

Future research might employ manipulations within an experimental paradigm whereby presenters of accounts are given differential feedback regarding their own accounts of personal events, to examine whether such feedback indeed influences future accounts and behaviors.

#### **4.2.12 Accounts in literary form**

##### **4.2.12.1 Characteristics of literary accounts**

###### **4.9.12.1.1 Accounts are compelling**

According to Miller (1987), account-making rouses strong interest. Accounts can be translated into different media and not all accounts are self-serving. The compellingness of accounts may take the form of a seeming "autobiographical urge". Sometimes this urge may be ill-formed or vague, inappropriate or uncomfortably intimate. But if we read it in a short story, or recognize it in a song, it can be real and riveting. One may feel as compelled to pay attention to it.



#### **4.2.12.1.2 Literary accounts are precipitated**

According to Harvey, Weber and Orbuch (1990) to extend that process to literary accounts, they suggest that a writer, for example, has collected many threads of an account-like story in his/her life, but pulls them together and present them coherently when she/he has become inspired by a real-life prompt to write it down, or a plot- or character-development within his/her writing that provides inspiration as well as a vehicle for this particular package. The iceberg of account, the massive, submerged bulk of ideas and motives accrues and weighs, but doesn't surface not until it's time. When it's time, the account rendition may not be deliberately concocted, but rather well up from the writer's experience.

In the short poem "Ein Leben" (A life), the poet Pagis (1989) reconstructs his interpretation of what is happening in a photograph taken of his mother when he was a small boy. She died within the month, and in the poem Pagis interprets the qualities of the photograph, her appearance, her mood, the lights and shadows as portending the fragility of her life and the imminence of her departure.

#### **4.2.12.1.3 Influences on the form of literary accounts**

According to Miller (1987), literary accounts' form is influenced by personal and situational factors. Cultural context in which the writer or speaker is working is one of the factors. Subcultural expectations might also influence the account-maker's form of expression. The form of literary account may be a matter of the media of facility. Important things to consider in the composition of a literary account are the audience, their expectations and motives. Accounts may take the form of a literary work.

#### **4.2.12.2 Functions of literary accounts**

##### **4.2.12.2.1 Rationalization and justification**

According to Harvey et al. (1990), an account is often woven into a story to ground the author or a character's motives, building up to a pinch-point or climax. E.g., in Laurie Colwin's novel "Family Happiness", Polly talks with her secret lover, Lincoln, about her feelings regarding her



family, including her guilt over having betrayed her husband Henry by cheating on him. Lincoln summarizes for Polly his impression of her family based on his conviction that, when she met him, she was neglected and love-starved. Far from being the innocent victims of Polly's deception, her family are, for Lincoln, the culprits who drove her into another man's arms. Lincoln goes on to give his account of Polly's family life, a version that not only exonerates her for having sought authentic happiness outside her marriage, but questions her intelligence in having waited so long to do so. Lincoln is now speaking his mind, but has made his observations and drawn his conclusions, his own rationalizations about the wisdom of the affair from Polly's perspective, all along. His tacit understandings are packaged into this angry diatribe when he has had enough of Polly's self-berating for violating the trust of her loving family.

#### **4.2.12.2.2 Characterization**

Harvey et al. (1990) states that accounts can also be used to:

- Explain characters' behavior and experiences.
- Enrich the history of a scene or plot development.
- Bring the reader up to date on the dramatic or comic action.

For example, in a short story entitled "Slippage" John Updike uses an abbreviated account to explain the character and current crisis of Morison, a history professor past his own possibilities. Morison's wife was his former student, he was a history professor, on his last day of term his lecture is rewarded with customary student applause, and he reflects on his own career and its failure to earn a note in history. Update achieves volumes of characterization and caricature in a few lines of Morison's reflection and introspection, because of the power and richness of the life-story. In this case, Updike's characterization of Morison is cerebral, with the emphasis on his work and career.

#### **4.2.12.2.3 Literary tone: Establishing rapport**

According to Harvey et al. (1990), another function of account in literary form is to establish rapport with the reader or listener, to respond to the audience's real needs for empathy,



reflection or friendship with the account maker. Research on the persuasive power of the vivid anecdote tells us that such emotion-laden story can be more moving than rational argument. A familiar account can powerfully involve an audience member more effectively than a list of reasons explaining why the author might deserve a reader's attention. Accounts may establish a more intimate tone between author and reader, because the fact of the account presents the writer as deserving of the reader's attention and appreciation.

#### **4.2.13 Themes of literary accounts**

Accounts in literary form convey different identifiable themes which yield much information about writers and readers, and assumptions about writers and readers. Examples of such themes are as follow:

##### **4.2.13.1 Memorializing**

The theme of accounts in literary form is that of remembering the past. Commemorating in literary accounts stresses the importance of remembering as an end in itself rather than a mere means to other ends like rationalization, self-satisfaction, or self-presentation. Memorializing can be focused on an anniversary, as it is in Miller's (1987) affair diary, in which she counts the passage of time (one year) since the beginning of her world-changing affair with Muller, and agonizes about the ambivalence she feels about wanting to share the remembrance with him, but not wanting to be the one who makes the call, or the appeal.

A familiar form for such commemoration is the sort of collective remembering presented in memoirs that take in the multiplicity of characters and places a writer considers. Toth has written two such works, *Blooming* (1981), about her formative years in Iowa, and *Ivy Days* (1984), about going to college in the East. Although she changed the names, the characters were too recognizable, since even persons she didn't remember later wrote her, insisting that they had found themselves in her books. It's important not only to remember the past, but also to be remembered. In *Ivy Days* (1984), for example, Toth commemorates a good friend, who changed for the worse, in twelve years since graduation. The friend Chris, had made a surprise visit to Toth, who was disturbed at how Chris had changed in character, she had gained weight, she drank a lot, and despite her claims of a busy career and social life, she



seemed bitter about having met her life-goals too early. Two years after their encounter, Toth read Chris's obituary in their alumnae magazine. Chris had died of a liver ailment at the age of 37.

At times the commemoration expresses grief for oneself, for being left alone with memories no one else shares. In "The Passing of Thistle", the poet Davison (1989) addressed his loss and longing for remembrance in grieving after the death of a pet whom the poem credits with sharing, if not recounting, the poet's memories. The poem was published in the September 1989 edition of *The Atlantic*, in the December issue were published several letters that praise Davison's (1989) poem and go on to explain in some detail their own memories of grief over their own pets.

#### **4.2.13.2 Self-presentation**

Harvey et al. (1990) states that self-presentation reveals one's background, i.e. the author's characters even in an abbreviated package, one says, "This is who I am", "This is why you should care about me".

Such accounts will pursue ulterior motives of manipulating the readers' affections. Others will simply self-reveal and leave it up to the audience to decide whether and how the revelation will take effect. In *Daybook: Journal of an artist*, Truitt (1982) conveys a powerful sense of what it means to be an artist, not by ceaselessly explaining herself to unknown readers, but by revealing her deepest discoveries and concerns in admissions. In one journal entry Truitt (1982) reflects on her sorrow earlier in the day upon her realization that a cherished series of paintings, recently sold, will remain after her in the world, while her own life and identity will end. Her joy in the endurance and value of her work is tempered by her confrontation with mortality and the drain of productivity. Truitt's (1982) brief diary entry powerfully expresses the paradox of what Freudian psychologist Erikson (1963) called the generativity crisis, which is the struggle to leave something of worth and permanence behind one's own brief lifetime.

*Dubliners* (1916) states that the person's perception power of accounts is also illustrated in James Joyce's short story, "The Dead", the last piece in his classic collection of character studies. In this story, a married couple, Gabriel and Gretta, attend a dinner party, and Gretta



becomes distracted by a ballad sung by one of the guests. Alone later when preparing for bed, she tearfully tells Gabriel that the song reminded her of a boy she knew when she was young, a boy who had died for love of her, and whom she continued to mourn.

#### **4.2.13.3 Making sense**

According to Shotter (1987), literary accounts are used to make sense out of one's experiences and to establish the meaning in one's life. One form of such sense-making involves portraying a person's experiences as being inevitable as though the context were scripted, the actor had no choice, and what seemed spontaneous at the time has in fact turned out to be one more subplot within a powerful pattern. In her novel "Postcards from the Edge", Fisher (1987) tells the story of a young actress, Suzanne Vale, who has been beleaguered by drug dependency and disappointing relationship.

#### **4.2.13.4 Entertainment**

Here the account-maker entertains his or her audience as well as him or herself. Entertainment is the most important theme in published accounts. In Ephron's (1983) novel "Heartburn", based closely and poignantly on the breakdown of her marriage to the news reporter Carl Bernstein, Ephron's protagonist Rachel argues with her therapist, Vera about making a joke out of the painful event in her life:

Vera said: "Why do you feel you have to turn everything into a story?"

So I told her why:

Because if I tell the story, I control the version.

Because if I tell the story, I can make you laugh and I would rather have you laugh at me than feel sorry for me.

Because if I tell the story, it doesn't hurt as much.

Because if I tell the story, I can get on with it (Ephron, 1983:176-7).

Stone (1988) extends the entertainment theme by describing how once-sketchy anecdotes about ancestors or offspring will be embellished, added to a family's repertoire, and trotted out



to entertain the guests at family get-togethers. In the telling and retelling, with exaggerations and nuances to impress or amuse the audience, these new versions take on a life of their own, and resist any later paring down or streamlining to their original, less entertaining form.

#### **4.2.13.5 Making peace**

According to Radner (1989), a need for justification is often a quest for forgiveness and understanding. The account-maker lays out a chronicle of his/her experiences, showing how events had to transpire, perhaps asking forgiveness. Some stories have more of a sense of confession than of confiding. In her book "It's always something", the late comedienne Radner (1989) describes her experiences battling with cancer that ultimately took her life shortly after her book was published.

Thompson and Janigian (1988) observe that life schemata provide a framework for understanding people's search for meaning, that a life schema tells the story with oneself as protagonist. Similarly, in such example as Radner's (1989), the quest for exoneration or understanding articulates itself as a plea to the reader to keep a sense of perspective, to refrain from judging the subject any more harshly than she judges herself.

#### **4.2.14 Stories within stories: The account-making drive**

According to Whitman's (1982), accounts rouse strong interest. We are driven to tell our stories. Accounts cast into literary form seem other than real, less than frank. We might speculate at this point on just which stories are our stories. But we are generous, we claim other's stories as our own. In Whitman's words: "I am large, I contain multitudes" (1982:246). The lives of those we love becomes our stories as well. It may be that lives within our culture are ours to recount in broader terms, in legend and myth, perhaps, rather than in chronicle or journal. In the process of retelling a simple anecdote we perceive a truth, a common bond with others, and in adding our story to the cultural repertoire, we also earn the right to borrow from that larger store of stories in weaving our own stories.



Whitman (1982) states that if accounts are compelling, then accounts, in literary form, aren't so much crafted as revealed. They bubble to the surface seeking their own level, in spite of the author's efforts at disguise or containment. Maybe all first works are autobiographical, not because all first-time writers are narcissistic but because all subsequent stories must follow from that first account, which has to be let go to release the others. Stories emerge into a final form because that's their natural, inevitable form.

Whitman (1982) continues by saying if accounts are compelling, and if our stories seek expression through us in fiction if we are crafters of fiction, in diary entries if we are scribes, then when are these stories likely to emerge? In our review of family stories, we suggested that such stories function as a sort of familial glue, timely lessons in family integrity, useful to recite in times of stress and despair. According to Horowitz (1986), account making is most intense in working through stage and achieving closure in response to a stressor event. To extend this model from the individual to the cultural level, it seems plausible that a culture would use its storytelling forms most particularly in times of cultural stress and transition, much as an individual account-maker does in personal moments of questioning and crisis.

If accounts in literary form develop in response to cultural crisis, this will lead to developments in many genre, not only those forms recognized as literary. Cultural accounts will emerge in music, visual and theater arts, even informal scripts for personal interaction.

#### **4.2.15 Conclusion: Account-making and account-taking**

Account-making take both expressive and receptive forms. We account-make by seeking and resonating with the right stories, even if written by others, as well as by relating our own. We consume and construct the accounts. We tell our own stories as well as reading others' stories. We become satisfied when we tell our stories and be heard and accepted. Accounts in literary form are compelling, are composed in response to crisis, and take form according to the context within which they emerge.



## **4.2.16 Explaining one's self to others: reason-giving in a social context**

### **4.2.16.1 Constructing accounts: The role of explanatory coherence**

When we are reproached for some social failure, like harming someone or violating social rules, how do we construct an account for that failure so that it will be honored? Considerable research has focused on the nature of various kinds of accounts and their function in interpersonal situations, but little work has examined how people construct their accounts. When we construct our accounts, we want them to be honored (McLaughlin, Cody & Read, 1992).

This section outlines a model of how people construct accounts based on recent work on a knowledge structure approach to explanation and causal reasoning (Miller & Read, in press; Read, 1987; Read & Miller, 1989). Coherence of an account plays a major role in its construction and in its evaluation by others. In this model the coherence of an account is based on goal-based and causal links among the elements composing it. Others have meant by account the way in which people try to affect a repair of social failure. According to Cody and McLaughlin (1985, 1988) and Schonbach (1990) account sequence is as follow:

- It begins with a failure event. This failure involves a violation of social norms or expectation or an injury to another.
- Request for repair. Identifies what needs to be accounted for.
- In response, the accounter must give an account.

Four major types of accounts identified by (e.g. Cody & McLaughlin, 1990; Schonbach, 1990) are:

- (i) Excuses, in providing an excuse, the wrong-doers refuse their responsibility for the failure and thus attempt to avoid blame and punishment. The wrong-doer admits that an undesirable act occurred but argues that she/he isn't responsible for the harm. Excuses include the claim that the negative consequences were not foreseen or weren't foreseeable, or that the individual was under a considerable amount of outside pressure.



- (ii) Justifications, in giving justification, the offender admits responsibility for the offense but tries to show why no reproach is warranted. E.g., the wrong-doer may claim that the behavior was justified because no harm was actually done or because the action had positive consequences that outweighed any negative consequences.
- (iii) Concessions, its' another type of account in which the offender admits to the claimed offense, although often to the accompaniment of apologies, expression of remorse, or offers to make restitution. When individuals apologize or make offers of restitution they may still be seeking to deflect censure and blame, but they aren't using an account of the failure event to do so.
- (iv) Refusals, one type of refusal is to deny that the offense for which one is being accused of is occurred. E.g., "How can you say I insulted David?" That wasn't an insult. It's part of a certain kind of verbal game playing in which men engage. I didn't take it as an insult and he didn't take it that way too. In Cody and McLaughlin's (1988) work on accounting for traffic violations, a refusal would be a denial that the claimed traffic violation, such as speeding or parking illegally, had actually happened.

#### **4.2.16.2 How accounts are constructed**

##### **4.2.16.2.1 The role of goals in constructing accounts**

McLaughlin, Cody and Read (1992) state that goals shape accounts in social interaction, and different goals shape accounts in different ways. Many times presenting an accurate account will neither excuse nor justify our behavior. When we construct an account, we want it to be honored. Two major purposes that shape our accounts:

- (i) To construct an account that if honored would achieve the purpose of that account, whether it be to excuse one's behavior, justify it or to accept reproach from others.
- (ii) To have the account be honored. It's useless to construct an account which can't be honored.



#### 4.2.16.2.2 Preliminary steps in constructing an account

Miller & Read (1991), Read (1987), Read & Collin (1991) and others, Weber & Orbuch (1990) have argued that accounts can be viewed as stories or narratives that present a particular version of the happenings at issue. Consistent with work on story comprehension (e.g. Mandler, 1978; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Rumelhart, 1977; Schank & Abelson, 1977; Stein & Glen, 1979) and on the structure of social episodes (e.g. Argyle, Furnham & Graham, 1981; Barker, 1963; Forgas, 1979), argue that narratives have a typical form that consists of:

- The actor's goals;
- factors that instigated those goals, such as the actions of others, environmental occurrences, or personal characteristics of the actor(s);
- a behavioral sequence composed of the plans and strategies that are being enacted to achieve those goals;
- what happened to the goals? Are the goals satisfied or blocked?; and
- the physical and social situation in which the actions occurred.

Schlenker (1980) states that the accuser constructs the stories by:

- (i) Assessing the facts of the case.
- (ii) The accuser must ascertain what the reproacher knows of the facts, because this leads to the reproach.
- (iii) It's important to assess the reproacher's theories of social and physical causality because they provide the basis for the kinds of explanations the reproacher is likely to accept.

Schlenker (1980) states that in assessing the reproacher's theories we can rely on:

- (i) Our assumptions about the beliefs they are likely to hold simply as human beings;
- (ii) Our assumptions about an individual's beliefs as a member of a particular class or group of people; and
- (iii) Our knowledge of them as individual developed through our interactions with them and from information provided by others;



- (iv) We must decide what kind of account we wish to construct and what constraints or guidance this places on the account we can build.

According to Schlenker (1980), when we construct our accounts we must bear in mind:

- (a) The kind of account we wish to construct (e.g. excuse, justification, concession or refusal);
- (b) Our desire to have the account honored;
- (c) What we know of the facts of the case;
- (d) What the reproacher knows of the facts (or is likely to learn);
- (e) The reproacher's belief about social and physical causality; and
- (f) Our own beliefs about physical and social causality.

Major criterion for whether an account is honored is the extent to which the reproacher finds the account to be explanatorily coherent and to be more coherent than alternative accounts that the reproacher is likely to entertain.

#### **4.2.16.2.3 Bringing it all together: Constructing the account**

Constructing an account requires the integration of information into a coherent package. This can be done by using the model proposed by Miller and Read (1991) and based on work in text comprehension (e.g. Kintsch, 1988; Schank & Abelson, 1977) and connectionist modeling (e.g. Rumelhart, McClelland and the PDP research group, 1986; Thagard, 1989). The model includes two major steps:

- (i) Concepts associated with input information are activated and organized into a loose, heterogeneous network.
- (ii) This heterogeneous network of concepts is organized into a coherent representation of the input by the application of parallel constraint satisfaction processes that evaluate the explanatory coherence of the network.



**Step 1: Activation of related concepts** (Miller & Read, 1991)

Three primary sources of activated concepts are the failure for which we are being asked to account, the facts surrounding the failure, including events and situations leading to the failure, and our goals in giving accounts.

- (a) The failure event should activate a wide range of associated concepts.
- (b) The activation of an explanation pattern also activates various facts associated with that pattern.
- (c) Our goals in constructing the accounts should also affect which concepts are activated, as these goals shape the kind of account we try to build (e.g. concession, excuse, justifications and refusal).

**Step 2: Arriving at a coherent representation** (Miller & Read, 1991)

This process determines which of the activated concepts best characterizes the event and allows one to arrive at a coherent, consistent representation. Thagard's (1989) model of explanatory coherence seeks to stimulate what makes a set of data and the hypotheses that explain them explanatorily coherent. He proposed several principles for the evaluation of the coherence of the network of data and hypothesized explanations.

The principles are as follow:

- (a) The explanation that requires the fewest assumptions will be more coherent. This is the principle of simplicity. The greater the number of explanations needed to explain a single fact, the smaller the amount of activation from that fact to each explanation.
- (b) An explanation that explains more facts, that has greater breadth, will be more coherent. Any given explanation becomes coherent as more facts are introduced that support it. This principle suggests that individuals can often make an account more coherent by making up facts that one's account explains.
- (c) Any given explanation is less coherent to the extent that some facts contradict it. Facts that contradict an explanatory hypothesis have a negative relationship to it and thus send negative activation to that hypothesis and reduce its activation.
- (d) Explanations are more coherent if they explained by higher order explanations.



- (e) Explanations are more coherent if they are supported by an analogy to another system with the similar causal structure (Read & Cesa, 1991).

In addition to these principles, Thagard's (1989) model assumes that the evaluation of explanations is often comparative.

When the primary emphasis is on constructing an accurate account, we should work from the facts to the explanations. However, when the primary goal is to excuse or justify, then we may often work from potential explanation to the facts. The goals of excusing and justifying should have three effects on the explanation, two of which occur during the first stage of the model, when concepts are activated.

- (a) They should affect which kinds of possible explanations are activated.
- (b) They may also activate aspects of those explanations that may lead to the fabrication of facts that make one's account more coherent.
- (c) A third effect of the goals occurred during the second stage of the model when parallel constraint satisfaction processes are applied to create a coherent account.

According to Thagard (1989) the following happens when an individual tries to fabricate an account that will be accepted by the reproacher:

- (i) The goals of the account will activate potential explanations and these explanations may activate additional concepts that may become potential facts.
- (ii) The accounter knows what failure has to be accounted for. This failure will also activate potential explanations and associated concepts that also provide the basis for potential facts.
- (iii) The accounter should ascertain what facts the reproacher knows or is likely to know. Facts that are known to the reproacher place strong constraints on the explanation and on any attempt to fabricate facts.
- (iv) The accounter should figure out what social and physical theories are believed by the reproacher. These theories give potential explanation for the offense.



## Two kinds of facts

- Some are known by the reproacher, and they should be given greater weight by the accouter when constructing the account.
- Others are hypothesized or made up, and should therefore receive less weight. If a fact known to the reproacher and a hypothesized fact contradict each other, then the known fact should have the advantage. The hypothesized fact gains greater plausibility if it is explained by an explanation and isn't contradicted by other facts or explanation. Part of Thagard's (1989) model that is important here is that the transmission of activation is symmetric. Not only do facts send activation to their explanations, but explanations send activation to the facts they explain. A coherent explanation can provide support for hypothesized facts, i.e. it explains and help make these facts believable.

### 4.2.17 Honoring the account

The consequences of honoring or no honoring an account (Cody & McLaughlin, 1990; Schonbach, 1990).

Little attention has been given to how the reproacher decides whether or not to honor the account. The current model provides some insight into this question. Just as the accouter evaluates the coherence of the account as he/she construct it, Cody & McLaughlin (1990) and Schonbach (1990) argue that key to reproacher's decision as to whether to accept the account is the reproacher's judgment of its coherence. And the reproacher's judgment of coherence will depend on exactly the same principles as are used by the accouter in constructing the account. This doesn't mean that that reproacher and accouter will find the same account to be equally coherent. The coherence of an account depends on the facts and explanatory theories held by the individual judging coherence. If reproacher and accouter differ on these things, they may differ radically in their perceptions of the coherence of an account.



#### **4.2.18 The social-interactive aspects of account-giving**

According to Cody and McLaughlin (1990) and Schonbach (1990), considerable attention has focused on the determinants of accounts. There is a little doubt that the communication of an account is strongly influenced by attributions, normative expectations, beliefs concerning the probable effect accounts have on different receivers, and beliefs about receivers' emotional reaction to accounts.

In a situation where accounts are communicated face-to-face, a reproacher's behavior in requesting an account serves as a determinant of accounting behavior. A severely phrased form of reproach often impacts on the account episode in three ways:

- (i) Extremely hostile forms of reproach often cause defensive reactions on the part of account giver.
- (ii) Reproachers who employ severely phrased reproaches are predisposed to rejecting the account, no matter what type of account is communicated.

Braaten, Cody & Bell (1990) and Schonbach (1990) state that projects found that reproachers who use severely phrased rebukes reject the account that was communicated. Braaten et al. (1990) also state that the use of severe forms of reproach is associated with more frequent complaints by members and higher stress ratings, dissatisfaction, and anger.

- (iii) Severe forms of reproach will result in more negative relational and emotional consequences than less severe forms of reproach.

##### **4.2.18.1 The account episode**

###### **4.2.18.1.1 The basic structure of the account episode**

A basic structure to an account episode:

- (i) A need to explain the occurrence of a failure event. The account phase is initiated with a realization that the actor is held rightly or falsely to be at least partly responsible by



the reproacher for an action that is either a violation of normative expectation (i.e., “You wore that dress to a job interview?”) or an omission of an obligation (i.e., “Why didn’t you pay the phone bill on time?”). No single typology of failure event exists. In legal settings, the type of offense represents qualitatively different types of failure events, and the different types of offenses are related to excuses and apologies communicated to parole boards and other relevant receivers (Carrol & Payne, 1977; Felson & Ribner, 1981; Henderson & Hewstone, 1984; Riordan, Marlin & Kellogg, 1983; Rothman & Gandossy, 1982).

In organizational settings, failure events include justifying questionable decisions, tardiness, accounting for performance errors, etc. Failure event in different settings share similar underlying variables: severity of the offense, causal attributions, guilt feelings, felt responsibility, and normative expectations.

- (ii) Account episodes involve a reproach, an account, and an evaluation. Each type of communication can be arrayed on a continuum of politeness or preference, or along a mitigation aggravation continuum.

Accounts are coded into four categories: apologies, excuses, justifications, and denials/refusals.

In interpersonal settings, apologies and excuses are perceived as more polite and more helpful in resolving a dispute and in avoiding conflict, than justifications and refusals/denials. Apologies and excuses are more effective in performing remedial work. Braaten et al. (1990) and Holtgraves (1989) found that full blown apologies are more effective than perfunctory apologies, excuses that consist of an element of regret were more effective than excuses with no regret (Holtgraves, 1989), or excuses having appeals to accident were more frequently honored than denial of intent.

- (iii) The forms of evaluating accounts differ from polite or mitigating to more aggravating forms.



#### 4.2.19 Are reproaches necessary?

According to McLaughlin, Cody & Read (1992) accounts are communicated when expectations are violated.

Reproaches aren't always necessary. In some settings (e.g. medical interviews), reproaches are not needed because the purpose of the communication exchange is to hear and evaluate accounts. In most settings reproaches are frequently needed. Or at least implicit in that account-givers know that an explanation is required and that they'll need to communicate the account at some time.

#### 4.2.20 Reproach forms and the reproach-account phase

Two hypotheses concerning the reproach-account phase of the account episode are as follow:

- (i) A "reciprocity" expectation predicted that reproach forms elicit similar kinds of accounts, that is polite reproaches, elicit polite accounts, and hostile or aggravating forms of reproaches elicit hostile or aggravating accounts (Cody & McLaughlin, 1985; McLaughlin, Cody & O'Hair, 1983; McLaughlin, Cody & Rosenstein, 1983).

McLaughlin, Cody and O'Hair (1983) find that reproachers employ one of six strategies for eliciting an account. Two implicit forms were silence and behavioral cues. Four verbal tactics mirrored four basic forms of accounts. When using a **projected concession** the reproacher lead the account-giver to admit guilt or apology.

In **projected excuse**, the reproacher indicates that she/he expects the account-giver to deny responsibility for the failure event.

In a **projected justification**, the reproacher communicates that she/he anticipates hearing the account-giver minimize the severity of the failure event, or defend a questionable action.



In a **projected refusal**, the reproacher suggests that the account-giver will deny guilt, failure event, or deny the reproacher's right to ask for an account.

The McLaughlin, Cody and O'Hair (1983) study found that:

- (a) Projected concession do in fact lead to concessions, and
- (b) that projected refusals lead to refusals, and projected refusals are negatively related to excuses.
- (c) While projected concession result in more frequent concessions, projected concessions also elicited more frequent reliance on refusals.

A second hypothesis relies on psychological reactance theory and predicts that a severely phrased reproach form represents a threat to the account-giver's freedom and produces defensive reactions. Threats to one's freedom elicit a defensive reaction.

Braaten et al. (1990) found that:

- (a) Severe forms of reproach have an impact on accounts, rebukes frequently elicit refusals/denials, while polite requests and implicit reproaches rarely elicit refusals/denials. Rebukes and direct requests elicit more aggravating forms of accounts.
- (b) Reproaches who employ rebukes are more likely to evaluate accounts negatively.

#### 4.2.21 Different types of severe reproaches

Braaten et al.'s (1990) forms of severe reproaches include:

- (i) **Attack on esteem.** This form of reproach implies that the failure event was caused by causes that are personal, intentional, controllable, and stable. Here reproach is used to claim that the account-giver is incompetent, stupid, racist or bigoted, slow, untrainable, or dumb. E.g., of severe reproaches: attacks on esteem:  
 "Of course, the manager was so mad, and he told met that I was irresponsible, up to the extent that he accused me of doing it intentionally, but I explained ..."  
 "Are you stupid, or what? You sent the wrong report to this customer!"



"He (over) acted by being emotional, rolling his eyes. He tried to make it seem like I was dumb ..."

"I was called up about a refused notification. She said: How long have you been working at the bank? How old are you? Are you a trainee? She was not polite!"

"I know there are certain racial overtones here ... He tried to make me into a racist or something!"

- (ii) **Attack on commitment/dedication.** The attack on commitment reproaches involved the more specific claim that the account-giver was not putting much effort into his/her work. Attack on esteem and attack of commitment/dedication imply that the failure event was caused by causes that are personal, intentional, controllable and stable. E.g.'s, of severe reproaches: attacks on commitment/ dedication:

"Lady, this is your job. You gotta learn it!"

"I was told that I wasn't putt my 'all' into my work, that I was more involved with school ..."

"If I can do my half on time, why can't you?"

"You have to work full time when you are here".

"I don't understand this. Why are you leaving early? Again. The rules apply to everyone!"

"You have to start attending regular meeting. It's part of the job. everyone does this".

According to Braaten et al. (1990) three other forms of severe reproaches include:

- (iii) Anger expression; anger expression reflect, a form of severe reproach that is qualitatively different from the other forms. Managers or colleagues who express anger by yelling, being aggressive, and screaming are engaging in behaviors that would be perceived as failure events in normal interpersonal settings. Anger expressions should be controlled by individuals, and once it is expressed, the reproacher should account for his/her violation.
- (iv) Rude behavior; rude behavior can be intentional, controllable, and manipulative, and were used with some frequency to assert dominance over the account-giver.
- (v) Threats/warnings; rude behaviors can be more intentional, controllable and manipulative.



Threats/warnings involved a group of reproaches in which the account-giver was described as already guilty of having made a mistake and was written up for an offense.

#### **4.2.22 The management of failure events**

This study examine the impact upon actors selection of strategies to manage failure events of several contextual factors, failure management strategies, characteristics of the actor-reproacher relationship, severity of the failure event, nature of the reproach and attitude toward a failure event.

##### **4.2.22.1 Actors selection of strategies to manage failure events**

#### **Excuses**

According to Scott and Lyman (1968), in offering an excuse, the actor admits the failure event, but denies that she/he is responsible for it.

Four forms of excuse distinguished by Scott and Lyman (1968):

- (i) Appeal to accidents (e.g. "I got held up in traffic");
- (ii) Appeal to defeasibility (e.g. "I was drunk");
- (iii) Appeal to biological drives (e.g. "I can't help it –I'm a man"; and
- (iv) Scapegoating (e.g. "I blame it on the serpent").

#### **Justifications**

Harré (1977) classifies justifications as either conventionalizations (e.g. "I wasn't staring into space – I was thinking) or normalizations (e.g. "Everybody cheats on his income tax"), and by Scott and Lyman (1968) as denial of injury (e.g. "Nobody got hurt"), and denial of victim (e.g. "She was no good"), condemnation of the condemners (e.g. "It's no worse than what you did") and appeal to loyalties (e.g. "My mom needed an operation").



## **Concession**

According to Scott and Lyman (1968) the actor admits that he/she is guilty of failure event and he/she apologizes and offers restitution.

## **Refusal**

Schonbach (1980) defines refusal as a failure management strategy in which the actor denies that she/he is guilty of the failure event, that the failure even has occurred, or that the accuser is entitled to the right to reproach.

## **Silence**

According to Schonbach (1990) the actor decides to keep quite when she/he realizes that accounting will make matters worse.

### **4.2.23 Failure management strategies, face-threatening acts, and the aggravation-mitigation continuum**

Face-threatening acts may be characterized as threats either to positive face or to negative face. Face-threatening acts may be further categorized according to whether they constitute a threat to the speaker's or the hearer's face. Excuse and concession primarily constitute threats to the speaker's face, and justification and refusal are threats to the hearer's face. Excuses offend the actor's negative face in that she/he is seen as experiencing a loss of privacy and autonomy, whereas concessions threaten his/her positive face. Justification and refusal constitute threats to the hearer's or reproacher's positive face in that they convey the speaker's assessment that the hearer's position on some issue is wrong headed.

### **4.2.24 Characteristics of the actor-reproacher relationship**

Intimacy and dominance are factors that have been obtained in studies of the dimensions of interpersonal relationships (Bochner, Kaminski & Fitzpatrick, 1977; Cody, 1978; Cody &



McLaughlin, 1980; Forgas, 1976; Wish, 1975). Intimacy has been a major determinant of strategy selection in interpersonal persuasion and conflict.

Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979) find that in relationships characterized as casual involvements, conflict tactics of manipulation and non-negotiation (refusal to compromise) were frequently reported, whereas among married people emotional appeals and personal rejection were frequently utilized. Michener and Schwertfeger (1972) find that the agent's desire to be liked by the target of a power tactic tended to lead to the use of conciliatory rather than potentially disruptive tactics. Clark (1979) finds that a persuader who desired liking from a target was more likely to report strategies oriented to helping the other than a persuader who didn't. Miller, Boster, Roloff and Seibold (1977) find that positive strategies were preferred in intimate situations, while with non-intimates justifying strategies were favored.

Our expectation is that increased relational intimacy will enhance the likelihood that the more mitigating strategies will be used to manage failure event, although as Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979) have argued, the fact of relational commitment may make possible the use of aggravating strategies on an occasional basis, since the parties are less concerned with the threat of termination.

The comparative relational power of the actor and the reproacher, or the reproacher's relative dominance, can be expected to account for variation in failure management strategies. Falbo and Peplau (1980), in a study of power tactics, found that people who place great emphasis on an egalitarian relationship between intimates were likely to report using negatively polite unilateral strategies (*laissez faire* and withdrawal) to get their way, whereas persons who felt that equal powers between intimates was less important reported a preference for bilateral strategies such as persuasion and bargaining.

Kipnis and Cohen (1980) find that in dating couples the individual who made decisions regarding both partners was more likely to employ strong interpersonal tactics as opposed to weak tactics. According to Blumstein et al. (1974) accounts were found to be more likely to be honored when the actor was of higher status. Robey (1980) finds that in high intimacy relationships, the more aggravating non-negotiation strategies were rated more favorably when relational consequences were short-term as opposed to long-term, while the more



mitigating negotiation strategies were preferred when the relational consequences were long-term as opposed to short-term.

#### **4.2.25 Severity of the failure event as a determinant of failure-management strategy selection**

Blumstein, P.W., Carsow, K.G., Hall, J., Hawkins, B., Hoffman, R., Ishem, E., Maurer, C.P., Spens, D., Taylor, J. & Zimmermann, D.L. (1974) found:

- (i) that the offensiveness of a failure event was a predictor of whether an account would be honored, so that the more severe the violation, the more likely the actor was to be held responsible and to be regarded as unrepentant; and
- (ii) that failure event were judged in the moral abstract even after the actor had given an account (Blumstein et al., 1974:558).

These findings suggest that when the failure event constitutes a severe offense, the actor will recognize that mere excuses may not result in accepting, and we would anticipate that mitigating strategy, concession, will be used when the failure event is serious and that aggravating strategies will be avoided.

#### **4.2.26 Communicative goal orientation**

Clark and Delia (1979) have argue that the selection of message strategies in a persuasive situation will differ as a function of the importance of the following communicative goals:

- (a) Relational maintenance;
- (b) identity or face management; and
- (c) task or instrumental achievement.

The actor must choose one goal or any combination of these goals in order to manage a failure event. Blumstein et al. (1974) state that the task or instrumental goal of a communicator who account for an offense is to secure honoring. The primary identity or face management goal of the actor is to neutralize the potential threat of loss of face. Lastly, the



actor must assess to what extent it is important to choose a strategy that will maintain the status quo of his/her relationship with the reproacher.

#### **4.2.27 Nature of the reproach**

The impact of six forms of reproach on actor's selections of failure management strategies (Benoit, 1980; Garvey, 1977).

##### **(i) Silence**

In using silence, the victimized other makes no overt reproach, but the actor feels that an account is in order.

##### **(ii) Behavioral cues**

In giving behavioral cues, the victimized other makes no overt verbalization, but the actor takes his/her cues from the non-verbal behavior of the other.

##### **(iii) Projected concession**

Here the victimized other indicates that an apology and restitution is expected and that the actor should feel guilty about the failure event.

Projected concession could work in two ways:

- (i) The actor could respond with concession;
- (ii) the actor could become angry at being the object of a guilt induction and respond with a more aggravating strategy such as refusal.

##### **(iv) Projected excuse**

In projected excuse, the reproacher indicates that she/he expects the actor to deny responsibility for the failure event.



Projected excuse is usually in the form of a question and it's most probable that the response will be in the form of a relevant answer.

#### **(v) Projected justification**

In a projected justification, the victimized other indicates that she/he expects the actor to attempt to defend or to minimize the severity of the failure event.

Projected justification constitutes a potential attack on the actor's positive face, and we expect that this form of reproach will create hostility climate and elicit account forms such as justification and refusal.

#### **(vi) Projected refusal**

Here the reproacher suggests that the actor will deny guilt and failure event.

### **4.2.28 Attitude toward the failure event**

Attitude toward the failure event is the way that the actor feels about the offense itself (Benoit, 1980; Garvey, 1977).

If an actor feels unjustly accused, she/he will be unlikely to apologize or offer an excuse. Similarly, the actor who feels guilty about a failure event will use a mitigating strategy.

Three forms of attitude toward the failure event:

- (i) Sometimes the actor expresses guilt or regret;
- (ii) the actor admits the offense but does not report feeling guilty;
- (iii) the actor, feeling unfairly accused, may deny the failure event and the right of reproach.



## CHAPTER 5

### 5.1 THE CHARACTER OF SELF-NARRATIVE

#### 5.1.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time

According to Gergen (1994) self-narrative refers to an individual's account of the relationship among self-relevant events across time. When developing self-narrative we establish coherent connections among life events (Cohler, 1982; Kohli, 1981). A story is formulated in such a way that life events are systematically related. Instead of seeing our life as one thing after another, we formulate a story in which life events are logically related, rendered intelligible by their place in an order or "unfolding process" (De Waele and Harré, 1976). Our present identity isn't a sudden and mysterious event but a sensible result of a life story. As Bettelheim (1976) has argued, such creations of narrative order may be important in giving life a sense of meaning and direction.

The concept of self-narrative bears an affinity with a variety of constructs developed in other domains. Firstly, in cognitive psychology the concepts of scripts (Schank & Abelson, 1977), story schema (Mandler, 1984), predictability tree (Kelly & Keil, 1985), and narrative thought (Britton and Pellegrini, 1990) have all been used to account for the psychological basis for understanding and directing sequences of action across time. In contrast to the cognitive program, with its search for universal cognitive processes, rule-role theorists (such as Harré and Secord, 1972) and constructivists tend to emphasize the cultural contingency of different psychological states. Thus, the cognitivist's presumption of a narrative base of personal action is retained but with a grater sensitivity to the socio-cultural basis of such narratives. Bruner's (1986, 1990) work on narratives falls between these two orientations, holding to a view of universal cognitive function while simultaneously placing strong emphasis on cultural meaning systems.

#### 5.1.2 Social accounting

According to Gergen (1994) self-narratives are forms of social accounting or public discourse. Narratives are conversational resources, constructions open to continuous



alteration as interaction progresses. They may be used to indicate future actions, but they're not the cause of such actions. Self-narrative function like oral histories or morality tales within a society. Self-narratives are cultural resources that serve social purposes as self-identification, self-justification, self-criticism and social solidification. Narrative skills are acquired through interacting with others, not through being acted upon. It also agrees with those concerned with personal engagement in narrative, but it replaces the emphasis on the self-determining ego with social interchange.

According to Gergen (1994) scholars concerned with narratives are divided on the issue of truth value, many hold that narratives have the potential to bear truth, while others argue that narratives don't reflect but construct reality. The former view sees narrative as fact-driven, while the latter holds narrative to be fact-organizing or even fact-producing. Historians, biographers, and empiricists' understandably stress the truth-bearing possibilities of narrative.

### **5.1.3 Narratives are true**

Gergen (1994) states that stories are shared resources people use in ongoing relationships. Narratives create the sense of what is true. It's largely because of existing narrative form that telling the truth is an intelligible act.

## **5.2 STRUCTURE OF NARRATIVE ACCOUNTS**

### **5.2.1 Establishing a valued endpoint**

According to Gergen (1994) a good story must establish a goal, an event to be explained, a state to be reached or avoided, an outcome of significance or a point. The endpoint should be the narrative's theme. The endpoint may, for example, be the protagonist's well-being ("How I narrowly escaped death"), the discovery of something precious ("How he discovered his biological father"), personal loss ("How she lost her job") etc.

MacIntyre (1981:456) as quoted by Gergen (1994) proposes that "narrative requires an evaluative framework in which good or bad character helps to produce unfortunate or



happy outcomes". The demand for a valued endpoint introduces a strong cultural component (traditionally called "subjective bias" into the story.

### **5.2.2 Selection of events in the account**

Once an endpoint has been established it dictates the kinds of events that can figure in the account, thus greatly reducing the myriad candidates for eventhood. An intelligible story is one in which events make the goal probable, accessible, important, or strong. E.g., if a story is about winning a soccer match, the relevant events are those that bring that goal closer or make it more distant.

### **5.2.3 Ordering of events**

Events must be placed in an ordered arrangement. Linear, temporal sequence is widely used. Ong (1982) indicates that the bases for such: Order includes importance, interest, value and timeliness etc. may change with history. Linear temporal ordering is an convention that employs an internally coherent system of signs, its feature aren't required by the world as it is.

According to Bakhtin's (1981:250) terms, temporal accounts may be viewed as chronotopes, literary conventions governing space-time relationships or "the ground essential for the ... representability of events".

### **5.2.4 Stability of identity**

The character in the story must possess a coherent identity, across time. The protagonist can't felicitously serve as a villain at one moment and a hero in the next or demonstrate powers of genius unpredictably interspersed with moronic actions. Once defined by the narrator, the individual will retain his/her identity or function within the story. The exceptions to this general tendency are cases in which the narrative attempts to explain the change itself e.g., how the frog became a prince or the impoverished young man achieved financial success. Causal forces like war, poverty or education may bring change in an individual, and for dramatic effect a putative identity may give way to the real.



E.g., a trustworthy professor may turn out to be an arsonist. The well-formed story doesn't allow personality that takes many forms.

### **5.2.5 Causal linkage**

Events in the narrative must provide an explanation for the cause. As it is said, "The king died and then the queen died" is a rudimentary story, "The king died and then the queen died of grief" is the beginning of a real plot. Ricoeur (1981:278) as quoted by Gergen (1994) puts it like this, "Explanations must ... be woven into the narrative tissue". Explanation is achieved by selecting events that are causally linked. Each event should be a product of that which has preceded it. E.g., because the rain came we fled indoors.

### **5.2.6 Demarcation signs**

Demarcation signs are signals that indicate the beginning and the end of a story. Young (1982) proposes that the narrative is framed by different rule-governed devices which show when one is entering the story world. The following statements signal the audience that a narrative is to follow: "Once upon a time ...", "Did you hear the one about ...", "You can't imagine what happened to me on the way over here ...", or "Let me tell you why I'm so happy ...". Endings may also be indicated by these phrases, "That's it ...", "So now you know..." Laughter at the end of a joke may signal the exit from the world of story, and often the description of the story's point is enough to indicate that the world of story is terminated.

Gergen's (1992) explorations of autobiography suggests that men are more likely to accommodate themselves to the prevailing criteria for proper story telling than women. She says that women's autobiographies are more likely to be structured around multiple endpoints and they include materials that are unrelated to any particular endpoint.

## **5.3 NARRATIVE FORMS**

Frye (1957) proposes four basic forms of narrative rooted in the human experience with nature and in the evolution of the seasons. The experience of spring and the blossoming forth of nature gives rise to the comedy. The freedom and calm of summer days inspire



the romance as a dramatic form. The romance consists of a series of episodes in which the protagonist experiences challenges or threats and through a series of struggles emerges victorious. The romance need not be concerned with attraction between people in its harmonious ending is similar to the comedy. Tragedy occurs during the autumn, when we experience the contrast between the life of summer and the death of oncoming winter. In winter, with our increasing awareness of unrealized expectations and the failure of our dreams, the satire becomes the expressive form.

### **5.3.1 Stability narrative**

According to Gergen (1994) stability narrative links events so that the individual's trajectory remains unchanged in relation to an outcome. Life still goes on, neither better nor worse. Stability narrative could be developed at any level along the evaluation continuum. At the upper end an individual might conclude, e.g., "I am still as attractive as I used to be", or at the lower end, "I continue to be haunted by feeling of failure". Each of these narrative possesses inherent implication for the future: in the first one, the individual might conclude that he/she will continue to be attractive for the foreseeable future, and in the second one, the feelings of failure will persist regardless of circumstance.

### **5.3.2 Progressive narrative**

Gergen (1994) states that progressive narrative links events so that the movement along the evaluative dimension over time is incremental. The progressive narrative is the panglossian account of life ever better in every way. It could be represented by the following statement, "I am really learning to overcome my shyness and be more open and friendly with people".

### **5.3.3 Regressive narrative**

In regressive narrative, movement is decremental. The movement depicts a continued downward slide. The regression narrative in contrast, depicts a continued downward slide. E.g., "I can't seem to control the events in my life anymore. It's been one series of catastrophes after another". Stability, progressive, and regressive narrative form exhaust



the fundamental options for the direction of movement in evaluative space. As such, they may be considered rudimentary bases for other more complex variants.

#### **5.3.4 Tragic narrative**

The tragic narrative tells the story of the rapid downfall of one who had achieved high position. Progressive narrative is followed by a rapid regressive narrative.

#### **5.3.5 Comedy-romance**

Here Gergen (1994) states that a regressive narrative is followed by a progressive narrative. Life events become increasingly problematic until the denouement, when happiness is restored to the main protagonists. This narrative conflates the Aristotelian forms.

#### **5.3.6 Happily-ever-after**

Here Gergen (1994) states that progressive narrative is followed by a stability narrative. Is widely exemplified in traditional courtship.

#### **5.3.7 Heroic saga**

Heroic saga has series of progressive-regressive phases. A person characterizes his or her past as a continuous series of battles against the power of darkness.

### **5.4 GENERATION OF DRAMA**

#### **5.4.1 Rapid decline in regressive narrative**

In tragic narrative, progressive narrative is followed by rapid regressive narrative. Regressive narrative is characterized by a moderate decline over time. The rapid acceleration or deceleration of the narrative slope constitutes one of the main components of dramatic engagement. In regressive narrative, there is unidirectionality in the slope line,



its direction does not change over time. In the tragic narrative, features of progressive narrative are followed by a regressive narrative.

#### **5.4.2 Alteration in narrative slope**

Alteration in the narrative slope is a shift in evaluative direction. A story in which there were many closely interspersed ups and downs would constitute high drama by common standards.

#### **5.4.3 Suspense and danger**

Suspense and danger are special cases of the two preceding rules. In both, drama depends on the impending possibility of acceleration or change. One is in suspense, e.g., when a victory, an award, a jackpot, etc. might be awarded. A person may be in danger when confronting the potential loss, destruction, or death.

### **5.5 PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATIVE: PROCESS**

#### **5.5.1 Variety of narrative forms**

According to Gergen (1994) relationships are entered with the potential to use any of a wide number of forms. He states that we can construct the relationship among our life experiences in different ways. Effective socialization should equip us to interpret our lives as stable, improving or as in decline.

#### **5.5.2 Macro-, micro-narrative**

Macro- and micro-narrative may be used to refer to the hypothetical or idealized ends of the temporal continuum. Macro-narratives refer to accounts in which events span broad periods of time, while micro-narratives relate events of brief duration. The autobiographer excels in macro-narrative, while the comedian strives to master micro-narrative. The autobiographer asks his or her present actions be understood against the backdrop of history, and comedian achieves success by removing him- or herself from history.



### **5.5.3 Nesting of narratives**

Narratives may be nested one within another. Individuals may account for themselves as the bearers of a long cultural history, but nested within this narrative may be an independent account of their development since childhood and within this account a change of heart experienced moments ago. People with an extended sense of their own history strive for more coherence between one narrative and another than those with a superficial sense of the past.

## **5.6 PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

According to Gergen (1994) self-narrative fulfills the following functions:

### **5.6.1 Stability narrative**

People's capacity to identify themselves as stable units has great utility within a culture. Stabilization enables us to speak of cultural patterns, institutions, and individual identities at all. In close relationship people wish to know that others are what they seem, and that certain characteristics endure across time. The best way of conveying such assurance is the stability narrative. Personality traits, moral character, and personal identity aren't so much the givens of social life, the building blocks of relationship, but the outcomes of relationship itself.

### **5.6.2 Progressive narrative**

Society places strong value on change and stability. Research suggests that people make use of the progressive narrative in the early stages of a relationship, and they invest the relationship with increased value and promise for the future. The progressive narrative plays various functions in social life. One must account for oneself as both inherently stable and undergoing change. A person should show that she/he has always been the same and will continue to be like that, and she/he will continue to improve.



### **5.6.3 Regressive narrative**

The narrative may solicit pity and concern, excuse one from failure, and deliver punishment. Within Western culture regressive narrative can serve a compensatory function. When people learn of worsening conditions, the description operates, by convention, as a challenge to compensate or seek improvement. Regressive narratives serve as a means for motivating people toward achieving positive ends.

## **5.7 INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

Narrated identities are interwoven within the culture. Self-narratives are immersed within processes of ongoing interchange. They unite the past with the present and to signify future trajectories.

### **5.7.1 Moral evaluation**

To maintain that one has always been an honest person (stability narrative) suggests that one can be trusted. To construct a person's past as a success story (progressive narrative) implies a future of continued advancement. On the other hand, to portray a person as losing his/her abilities because of his/her increasing age (regressive narrative), generates the expectation that he/she will be less energetic in the future. Self-narrative establishes the grounds for oral being within the community. It establishes reputation, and it is the community of reputations that form the core of a moral tradition. In order to sustain identity, successful negotiation is required at every turn.

### **5.7.2 Interminable negotiation**

Maintaining identity, narrative validity within a community is an interminable challenge. The incidents woven into narrative are the actions not only of the protagonist but of others as well. The actions of others contribute to the events linked in narrative sequence.



### **5.7.3 Reciprocal identities**

Narrative validity depends strongly on affirmation of others. An actor's success in sustaining a given self-narrative is dependent on the willingness of others to play out certain parts in relationship. A fundamental aspect of social life is the network of reciprocating identities. One's identity can be maintained for only so long as others play supporting roles in their constructions, the moment any participant chooses to renege, he/she threatens the array of interdependent constructions.

## **5.8 EMOTIONS**

### **5.8.1 Identity of emotions from personal experience**

Experience enables us to differentiate among emotions. The series of emotional indicators have been developed, like biological measures of heart rate, blood pressure, and penile erection, behavioural measure of facial expressions, motor movements, molar activities and verbal measures of facial expressions. Emotions of love, fear and anger are expressed in facial expressions, bodily movements, and tone of Voice. Emotional discourse gains its meaning not by virtue of its relationship to an inner word, but by the way it figures in patterns of cultural relationship.

### **5.8.2 Emotions constitute social life**

According to Gergen (1994) emotions do not have an impact on social life, they constitute social life. Human emotions may be justifiably studied because of their transparent existence in human experiences. And its experience that also enables us to distinguish among emotions. E.g., "I know that love, fear, and anger are different because I experience the differences clearly and distinctly". An enormous array of emotional indicators have been developed, e.g., biological measures of heart rate, GSR, blood pressure, and penile erection, behavioural measures of facial expressions, motor movements, molar activities, verbal measures of emotional expressions and the like. Although precise and unambiguous reading are achieved through these means, and the findings are often replicable, this focus on observable manifestations of emotions fully suppresses the vulnerability of the fundamental premises, firstly, that emotions do exist,



and secondly, that they manifest in these measures. We observe increased pulse rate, grimacing behavior, and the verbal declaration "I am fearful", it's the conclusions that fear exists and that these are its expressions for which the research provides no justification.

It's an unchallenged truism in Western culture that emotions such as love, fear, anger, etc. exist and that are expressed in facial expression, bodily movements, tone of voice and so on. That an investigator would study love versus liking, and claim that intensity of the look distinguishes the former from the latter.

#### **5.8.2.1 Cultural meaning (e.g. moral evaluation)**

As variously reasoned by Bedford (1957), Harré (1986) and Jones (1986), emotions can't be separated from moral evaluation. One can scarcely be blamed for one's heart rate or praised for one's digestive processes. To extract all social meaning from the emotion would reduce the person to automaton status, personlike but not fundamentally human (De Rivera, 1984).

#### **5.8.2.2 Emotions vary from one culture or historical period**

According to Lutz (1985), Harkness & Super (1983), Heelas & Lock (1981), Shweder (1991), Lutz & Abu-Lughod (1990) emotional expression differ from one culture or historical period to another. E.g. as Averill (1982) has demonstrated, patterns of what Westerners call hostility are scarcely found in many cultures, and bizarre patterns are wholly unknown in Western culture. Lutz (1985) has shown that these unique forms of performance (emotions in the west) have specialized meaning within their own cultural setting. The vocabulary of the emotions is subject to historical creation and erosion.

#### **5.8.3 Emotions are constituents of lived narrative**

Gergen (1994) states that the expression of jealousy must be preceded by certain conditions. A person can't express jealousy at the sight of a sunset or a traffic light, but jealousy is appropriate if one's lover shows signs of affection toward another. If the jealousy is expressed to the lover, he/she isn't free to start a conversation about whether to express deep joy or not. The lover may apologize or try to explain why jealousy is



unwanted, but the range of options will be limited. In effect, the two participants are engaged in a form of cultural game. The expression of jealousy is a single integer within the sequence, the ritual would be unrecognizable without it, but without the remainder of the ritual, jealousy would be nonsensical. These patterns of relationship can be viewed as emotional scenarios in formally scripted interchange. From this point, the emotional expression is only the possession of the single person in the sense that he/she is only the performer in a given act within the broader relational scenario, however, the emotional act is more fundamentally a creation of the relationship of a particular cultural history.

Emotional expressions are meaningful only when inserted into particular, cross-time sequences of interchange. They're constituents of lived narratives.

#### **5.8.4 Hostility and violence**

Hostility's acts can be casted as modes of cultural performance. Rather than see them as individual actions, we may consider the part they play in broader scenarios of interchange. Violence is viewed as an expression of hostile feelings. Felson's (1984) research provides a significant illustration of emotional performances as components of more extended relationships. The present work attempts to explore possible scenarios of hostility and violence in normal populations. This exploration was further inspired by an argument put forward by Pearce and Cronen (1980). They pointed out that there are many recurring patterns of interchange that are unwanted by the participants and yet are willingly and frequently repeated. Domestic violence is an example of such unwanted repetitive patterns, neither husband nor wife may want physical violence, but once the scenario has begun, they may bear on toward its normative conclusion that is physical abuse. This view also suggests that under certain circumstances hostility and violence may be viewed as appropriate by one or more participants in a relationship. To the participants, violence may be seen as not only appropriate but morally required.



## ANALYSIS OF ACCOUNTS

### FIRST ANALYSIS

### CO-OPERATION

## UPS AND DOWN OF MARRIAGE

*Re nyalane re sa le banyane dilemong. Matsatsing ao Lesotho lenyalo la setso le ne le tlwaelehile. Ka hoo, ha re ya ka ra eba mekgelo. Dikamano di ile tsa ba ntle dilemong tse mmalwa tse qalang. Ke ne ke dumela hore re tla ba mmoho ka mehla yohle empa bophelong, ho a etsahala hore baratani ba fellwe ke lerato. Mathata a hlaha mme dikamano di fetohela ruri.*

*Ke ile ka ba le ngwana wa pele, wa bobedi, le wa boraro ka ntle le mathata. Ha ke le mokgatjhane wa ngwana wa bone, monna ke ha a re ho nna, mosadi wa ka, na o a hlokomela hore na bophelo bo bo thata jwang? Ka mora tswalo ya ngwana enwa wa bone, ke kopa hore o ye therong ya malapa hore ngwana enwa e be wa ho qetela. Mabaka a ka ke a latelang: Ke sebetse ke le mong mme tjehele eo ke e fumanang dimmaeneng a nyane. Ka hoo, ke tla sitwa ho hlokomela lelapa le leholo. Lebaka la bobedi ke hore maemo a rona a tshebetso, ha a tsitsa, re ka nna ra fokotswa neng kapa neng. Ha seo se ka etsahala, bana ba rona batla fetoha mekopakopa.*

*Ke ne ke sa dumellane le molekane wa ka empa ha ke ya ka ka mo jwetsa hore na ke ikutlwa jwang ka taba eo. Jwalo ka mosadi wa mosotho, ke ne ke dumela hore mosadi ke mosadi ka bana. Ke ne ke dumela hore dilemo tsa ho kgaotsa ho ya matsatsing, ke tsona tse tla nthibela ho etsa bana. Ke ne ke sa tshepe dithibela pelehi hobane ke ne ke ye ke utlwe ho thwe ka dinako tse ding, lesea le tla le tshwere lupu ka letsoho. Ba bang ba re di ya nontsha, ha ba bang ba re di etsa hore mosadi a se be menate diphateng. Ka hoo, ha ke ya ka ka amohela keletso ya monna wa ka. Ke ile ka iphapanyetsa yona.*

*Ke ile ka ba moimana wa ngwana wa behlano. Ka ngolla molekane lengolo ho mo tsebisa sena. Bophelo bo ile ba qala ho ba boimanyana. Monna o ne a se a sa romele tjehele jwaloka ha a ne a tlwaetse. Ke ne ke tlameha ho kopa phoofo, sesepa, le tse ding ha mme matsale. Ka bomadimabe o ile a hloka hloka ka mona ho kula ho ho kgutshwane. O ile a tla lefung la mmae mme a ba a boela mosebetsing. Ngwana o ile a hlaha a ba a hola ka mathata ao. Mme o ne a re o tla ja seo ke se jang. Ka mora dilemo tse pedi, ke ile ka ba le ngwana wa botshelela.*

*Bophelo bo ile ba mpefala le ho feta. Ke ile ka tlameha ho ya ho mme wa ka ho mo kopa hore a nkimolle, monna ha a sa romela tjehele. Mme o ile a bona monna enwa e le motho ya sa kgathalleng lelapa. Le yena o ne a dumela hore mosadi ke mosadi ka bana. Ka hoo, o ne a bona monna wa ka a hloka boikarabelo.*

*Nako le nako ha monna a tla hae, o ne a ntshiya keimme. Eitse ha ke na le bana ba supileng keimme wa borobedi, monna ke ha a fokotsa dimmaeneng. O ne a na le nyatsi mmaeneng wa Rustenburg. Ha a lokela ho tla hae, ke ha a lo dula le yona.*



*O so ka nahana tshokolo eo ke neng ke e sokola ka bana ba robedi ntlong ya mokhukhunyana. Ke phetse bophelo boo bo boima dilemo tse mashome a mabedi kaofela. Bana ba ka ha ba a kena sekolo ka lebaka la ho hloka tjhelete. Ba sebeletsa batho mme bona ba ba thusa ka tjhelete – nyana ya ho reka dijo. Baradi ba ka ba babedi ba ile ba rekisa mmele hore fela ba kgone ho beha dijo hodima tafole. Ka selemo sa 2002, baradi ba ka ba babedi ba ile ba hloka hloka ke Kwatsi-ya-bosolla-tlhapi.*

*Monna wa ka ha a ka a tla lepatong la baradi. Eile ya ba o ile ho fihlela ka lena. Ke setse le phiphitha ya bana. Ho ya ka setso sa rona basotho, ha ho na motho ya nkang ho ba le lelapa le leholo e le phoso ha feela o nyetswe. Ke ne ke le e mong wa basadi ba neng ba dumela hore monna o batla mosadi ya sa sebetseng, ya dulang hae ho phehela bana le ho etsa bana.*

*Ke bohloko ke taba eo. Mme wa ka le setjhaba seo ke neng ke phela le sona, ba ne ba dumellana le nna hore ke etsa ntho e ntle ka ho pepa hore lebitso la moo ke nyetsweng le se shwe.*

*Ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho kgaohana le monna enwa mme ka tswela-pele ka bophelo. Ke ile ka sebetsa jwaloka mothusi wa malapeng ho na mona Lesotho, mme ke ntse ke fumana tjhelete ya ho phedisa bana ba ka. Le ha a ile jwalo, ha ke sa na taba le yena. Ke ntse ke kgona ho phela ka ntle le yena.*

We got married at an early age. Customary wedding was common during those days in Lesotho. So, we were not the exceptions. The relationship was good in the first few years of our marriage. I believed that we will be together forever but in real life, it happens that the couples do fall out of love. Problems arise and the relationship change for ever.

I had the first child, the second, and the third one without any problem. When I was pregnant with my fourth child, my husband said to me, my wife, are you aware how difficult this life is? After the birth of this fourth child, could you please go to the family planning so that this child should be the last one. My reasons are as follow: I'm working alone and the money I earn at the mines is very low. So, I won't be able to maintain a big family. The second reason is that our working conditions aren't stable, we can be retrenched at any time. If that might happen, our children will be beggars.

I didn't agree with my partner but I didn't tell him how do I feel about that. As a Christian, I believed in what God commanded us to do, to multiply. I believed that menopause will stop me from having babies. I didn't trust contraceptives because I used to hear people saying that sometimes a baby comes holding an IUD with a hand. Others say they make people fat, while other say they reduce sexual pleasure. So, I didn't accept my husband's advice. I ignored it.

I became pregnant with the fifth child. I wrote my husband a letter to let him know about this. Life became little difficult. My husband was no longer sending money as he was used to. I was forced to ask for a mealie meal, soap, and other things to my mother-in-law. Unfortunately she died after a short illness. My husband came to his mother's funeral and return back to work. The baby was born and grew within that difficulty. My mother said that the kids will eat what I eat. After two years, I had the sixth child.



Life became most difficult. I was forced to go to my mother to ask her to help me with the children, because my man was no longer sending money to maintain the children. My mother considered my man as a person who doesn't care for his family. She also believed that a woman is a woman because of babies, so, she found my man as irresponsible.

Every time when my husband came home, he left me pregnant. When I was having seven children, expecting the eighth one, my husband was retrenched from the mines. He had a secret lover at Rustenburg mine. He decided to stay there with his secret lover instead of going to his family.

You can imagine how hard it was to live with eight children in a small shack house with no one working. I lived that difficult life for twenty years. My children aren't educated because of money problems. They're working for other people and they give them money that will only buy food. My two daughters were involved in prostitution just to be able to put food on the table. In 2002, my two daughters died of AIDS.

My husband never came to his daughter's funeral. He was gone for ever until to date. I'm left with many children. According to our Sotho culture, no one consider having a big family as a mistake as long as you're married. I was one of those women who believed that a man wants a woman who is not working, who stays at home and cook for the children, and to make babies. I chose to be a baby making machine.

And now I'm alone with them. I'm hurt about this. My mother and the community in which I was living agreed with me that I was doing the right thing to have babies so that the name of the family in which I'm married shouldn't die.

I decided to leave that man alone and I carried on with my life. I work as a domestic worker here in Lesotho, and I'm now able to take care of my children with the income I receive. Even though he is gone, I don't mind. I'm able to survive without him.



## 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

### 1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure

- 1.1.1 This narrative relates the experiences of a married woman who had eight children by her husband, but against the wishes of her husband. Her experiences with her husband and her life with her children are organized in a series of ten events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.

#### THE FIRST EVENT

The couple married at an early stage through customary law and they originally had a good life, but the wife already foreshadowed some problems to come.

##### Narrative of the first event

*Re nyalane re sa le banyane dilemong. Matsatsing ao Lesotho lenyalo la setso le ne le tlwaelehile. Ka hoo, ha re ya ka ra eba mekgelo. Dikamano di ile tsa ba ntle dilemong tse mmalwa tse qalang. Ke ne ke dumela hore re tla ba mmoho ka mehla yohle empa bophelong, ho a etsahala hore baratani ba fellwe ke lerato. Mathata a hlaha mme dikamano di fetohela ruri.*

We got married at an early age. Customary wedding was common during those days in Lesotho. So, we were not the exceptions. The relationship was good in the first few years of our marriage. I believed that we will be together forever but in real life, it happens that the couples do fall out of love. Problems arise and the relationship change for ever.

#### THE SECOND EVENT

The wife had four children and eventually the husband requested her to consult family planning because his wages are really low and he may ultimately be retrenched.

##### Narrative of the second event

*Ke ile ka ba le ngwana wa pele, wa bobedi, le wa boraro ka ntle le mathata. Ha ke le mokgatjhane wa ngwana wa bone, monna ke ha a re ho nna, mosadi wa ka, na o a hlokomela hore na bophelo bo bo thata jwang? Ka mora tswalo ya ngwana enwa wa bone, ke kopa hore o ye therong ya malapa hore ngwana enwa e be wa ho qetela. Mabaka a ka ke a latelang: Ke sebetsa ke le mong mme tjhelete eo ke e fumanang dimmaeneng a nyane. Ka hoo, ke tla sitwa ho hlokomela lelapa le leholo. Lebaka la bobedi ke hore maemo a rona a tshebetso, ha a tsitsa, re ka nna ra fokotswa neng kapa neng. Ha seo se ka etsahala, bana ba rona batla fetoha mekopakopa.*

I had the first child, the second, and the third one without any problem. When I was pregnant with my fourth child, my husband said to me, my wife, are you aware how difficult this life is? After the birth of this fourth child, could you please go to the family planning so that this child should be the last one. My reasons are as follow: I'm working alone and the money I earn at the mines is very low. So, I won't be able to maintain a big family. The



second reason is that our working conditions aren't stable, we can be retrenched at any time. If that might happen, our children will be beggars.

### THE THIRD EVENT

The wife wanted to go on having children because it is expected from Christians and her culture and she didn't trust contraceptives.

#### Narrative of the third event

*Ke ne ke sa dumellane le molekane wa ka empa ha ke ya ka ka mo jwetsa hore na ke ikutlwa jwang ka taba eo. Jwalo ka mosadi wa mosotho, ke ne ke dumela hore mosadi ke mosadi ka bana. Ke ne ke dumela hore dilemo tsa ho kgaotsa ho ya matsatsing, ke tsona tse tla nthibela ho etsa bana. Ke ne ke sa tshepe dithibela pelehi hobane ke ne ke ye ke utlwe ho thwe ka dinako tse ding, lesea le tla le tshwere lupu ka letsoho. Ba bang ba re di ya nontsha, ha ba bang ba re di etsa hore mosadi a se be menate diphateng. Ka hoo, ha ke ya ka ka amohela keletso ya monna wa ka. Ke ile ka iphanyetsa yona.*

I didn't agree with my partner but I didn't tell him how do I feel about that. As a Christian, I believed in what God commanded us to do, to multiply. I believed that menopause will stop me from having babies. I didn't trust contraceptives because I used to hear people saying that sometimes a baby comes holding an IUD with a hand. Others say they make people fat, while other say they reduce sexual pleasure. So, I didn't accept my husband's advice. I ignored it.

### THE FOURTH EVENT

She had a fifth child and her husband no longer sends her money from the mines. She asked for assistance from her mother-in-law but she died thereafter. Her husband came for the funeral and then she had a sixth child after two years.

#### Narrative of the fourth event

*Ke ile ka ba moimana wa ngwana wa behlano. Ka ngolla molekane lengolo ho mo tsebisa sena. Bophelo bo ile ba qala ho ba boimanyana. Monna o ne a se a sa romele tjhelete jwaloka ha a ne a tlwaetse. Ke ne ke tlameha ho kopa phoofo, sesepa, le tse ding ha mme matsale. Ka bomadimabe o ile a hloka hloka ka mona ho kula ho ho kgutshwane. O ile a tla lefung la mmae mme a ba a boela mosebetsing. Ngwana o ile a hlaha a ba a hola ka mathata ao. Mme o ne a re o tla ja seo ke se jang. Ka mora dilemo tse pedi, ke ile ka ba le ngwana wa botshelela.*

I became pregnant with the fifth child. I wrote my husband a letter to let him know about this. Life became little difficult. My husband was no longer sending money as he was used to. I was forced to ask for a mealie meal, soap, and other things to my mother-in-law. Unfortunately she died after a short illness. My husband came to his mother's funeral and return back to work. The baby was born and grew within that difficulty. My mother said that the kids will eat what I eat. After two years, I had the sixth child.



## THE FIFTH EVENT

The wife asked her mother for help. Her mother regarded her husband as irresponsible and uncaring for his family and she (mother) agreed that a woman should have more babies.

### Narrative of the fifth event

*Bophelo bo ile ba mpefala le ho feta. Ke ile ka tlameha ho ya ho mme wa ka ho mo kopa hore a nkimolle, monna ha a sa romela tjhelete. Mme o ile a bona monna enwa e le motho ya sa kgathalleng lelapa. Le yena o ne a dumela hore mosadi ke mosadi ka bana. Ka hoo, o ne a bona monna wa ka a hloka boikarabelo.*

Life became most difficult. I was forced to go to my mother to ask her to help me with the children, because my man was no longer sending money to maintain the children. My mother considered my man as a person who doesn't care for his family. She also believed that a woman is a woman because of babies, so, she found my man as irresponsible.

## THE SIXTH EVENT

Each time her husband came home she had another child until she eventually had eight children. Her husband was then retrenched and he stayed at Rustenburg with his lover.

### Narrative of the sixth event

*Nako le nako ha monna a tla hae, o ne a ntshiya keimme. Eitse ha ke na le bana ba supileng keimme wa borobedi, monna ke ha a fokotswa dimmaeneng. O ne a na le nyatsi mmaeneng wa Rustenburg. Ha a lokela ho tla hae, ke ha a lo dula le yona.*

Every time when my husband came home, he left me pregnant. When I was having seven children, expecting the eighth one, my husband was retrenched from the mines. He had a secret lover at Rustenburg mine. He decided to stay there with his secret lover instead of going to his family.

## THE SEVENTH EVENT

The wife remained in the shack with her eight children with no one working. Her children are not educated, they work for low wages, her two daughters become prostitutes and died of AIDS.

### Narrative of the seventh event

*O so ka nahana tshokolo eo ke neng ke e sokola ka bana ba robedi ntlong ya mokhukhunyana. Ke phetse bophelo boo bo boima dilemo tse mashome a mabedi kaofela. Bana ba ka ha ba a kena sekolo ka lebaka la ho hloka tjhelete. Ba sebeletsa batho mme bona ba ba thusa ka tjhelete – nyana ya ho reka dijo. Baradi ba ka ba babedi ba ile ba rekisa mmele hore fela ba kgone ho beha dijo hodima tafole. Ka selemo sa 2002, baradi ba ka ba babedi ba ile ba hloka hloka ke Kwatsi-ya-bosolla-tlhapi.*



You can imagine how hard it was to live with eight children in a small shack house with no one working. I lived that difficult life for twenty years. My children aren't educated because of money problems. They're working for other people and they give them money that will only buy food. My two daughters were involved in prostitution just to be able to put food on the table. In 2002, my two daughters died of AIDS.

## THE EIGHTH EVENT

Her husband never came back not even for the funeral of her daughters. The wife, however, believed in a big family in marriage, and that men wanted wives who do not work, stay at home, cook and have babies.

### Narrative of the eighth event

*Monna wa ka ha a ka a tla lepatong la baradi. Eile ya ba o ile ho fihlela ka lena. Ke setse le phiphitha ya bana. Ho ya ka setso sa rona basotho, ha ho na motho ya nkang ho ba le lelapa le leholo e le phoso ha feela o nyetswe. Ke ne ke le e mong wa basadi ba neng ba dumela hore monna o batla mosadi ya sa sebetseng, ya dulang hae ho phehela bana le ho etsa bana.*

My husband never came to his daughter's funeral. He was gone for ever until to date. I'm left with many children. According to our Sotho culture, no one consider having a big family as a mistake as long as you're married. I was one of those women who believed that a man wants a woman who is not working, who stays at home and cook for the children, and to make babies. I chose to be a baby making machine.

## THE NINTH EVENT

The wife is now disillusioned, hurt and alone with her children. She still believed that she did the right thing for continuation of the family.

### Narrative of the ninth event

*Ke bohloko ke taba eo. Mme wa ka le setjhaba seo ke neng ke phela le sona, ba ne ba dumellana le nna hore ke etsa ntho e ntle ka ho pepa hore lebitso la moo ke nyetsweng le se shwe.*

And now I'm alone with them. I'm hurt about this. My mother and the community in which I was living agreed with me that I was doing the right thing to have babies so that the name of the family in which I'm married shouldn't die.



## THE TENTH EVENT

The wife eventually accepted her circumstances and left her husband alone, she carried on with her life and is now a domestic worker and able to take care of her children. She is resigned to stay like this: She is then able to survive without her husband.

### Narrative of the tenth event

*Ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho kgaohana le monna enwa mme ka tswela-pele ka bophelo. Ke ile ka sebetša jwaloka mothusi wa malapeng ho na mona Lesotho, mme ke ntse ke fumana tjhelete ya ho phedisa bana ba ka. Le ha a ile jwalo, ha ke sa na taba le yena. Ke ntse ke kgona ho phela ka ntle le yena.*

I decided to leave that man alone and I carried on with my life. I work as a domestic worker here in Lesotho, and I'm now able to take care of my children with the income I receive. Even though he is gone, I don't mind. I'm able to survive without him.

### 1.2 Endpoint: Theme of the narrative

The theme of the narrative is co-operation. If there is no co-operation in the marriage, the marriage is bound to fail like this one. It's clear enough that the woman doesn't want to co-operate because her husband has made his request clear that she must take precautionary measures so that they must have a limited number of children. His reasons are that he earns a low salary, he works alone, and his working conditions are not stable, but his wife doesn't want to co-operate. She wants to please her parent and her community.

### 1.3 Ordering of events

#### 1.3.1 Sequence

The events in this narrative are ordered in linear sequence. They follow one another in this manner: One event leads to the other. Firstly they have three kids and things were going smoothly, the wife was able to look after the kids. During the birth of the fourth kid, still things are going well, but the husband begins to feel that things might be difficult if a woman doesn't take precautionary measures. Secondly, the woman ignores her husband's advice, as the result of her ignorance, the husband deserts them. Thirdly, the children suffer, and her two daughters get involved in prostitution, as a result they die of AIDS.

#### 1.3.2 Duration

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about twenty years.

### 1.4 Stability of identity

The narrator has a coherent identity: She never falters in her beliefs about the duties of a wife and she kept on having children and trying to look after her family. The problems she encounters she believes to be the result of her husband's not supporting her family.



## 1.5 Causal linkage

The events in this narrative are causally linked. The events show the relationship of cause and effect.

**Cause:** Her beliefs in the duties of a wife.

**Effect:** Desertion by the husband.

The couple married at an early stage. The wife had four children and the husband requested her to consult family planning because he feels that things might be difficult if his wife doesn't take precautionary measures. The wife doesn't co-operate because it's expected from Christians and her culture and she doesn't trust contraceptives. She had fifth child and her husband no longer sends her money. She asks her mother for help. Each time her husband came home she had another child until she had eight children. Her husband got retrenched and he stayed at Rustenburg with his lover. The wife remains in the shack with her children and two of her daughters became prostitutes and died of AIDS. Her husband didn't come for the funeral of her daughters. His wife is hurt but she still believed in a big family. She eventually accepted her circumstances and left her husband alone. She is now a domestic worker and she is able to take care of her children.

## 1.6 Demarcation signs

There are no demarcation signs in this narrative.

## 2. NARRATIVE FORM

The story has a progressive and regressive form.

### 2.1 Progressive narrative

It's progressive in the sense that the woman works as a domestic worker. She is now able to nourish her kids the way she wanted. Life goes well for the woman and her kids. They have direction in their new life after the father deserts them.

### 2.2 Regressive narrative

It's regressive in the sense that now they have got more than expected number of children, and life doesn't go well for them. The husband loses his work, he deserts his family, kids resorts to prostitution, two of his kids die, and the woman ends up raising too many children.

## 3. SELF-NARRATIVE

### 3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time

In this narrative, the events are related in the sense that each event leads to the other. Firstly, the husband begins to feel that things might be difficult if a woman doesn't take precautionary measures. His wife doesn't want to co-operate, she has more than



expected number of children and life doesn't go well, her husband deserts her. Secondly, kids suffer, and her two daughters resort to prostitution, as a result, they die of AIDS. Thirdly, the woman decides to work as a domestic worker and life goes well for them.

### **3.2 Social accounting**

**Self-justification:** This shows how the narrator justifies her actions e.g. her cultural and Christian beliefs, her interpretation of the duties of a wife in marriage.

### **3.3 Narrative is true**

This narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if you aren't co-operative in your marriage, your marriage has great chances of falling apart. The partners who don't listen to each other and try to please other people than their partners their marriage will be like this one. It also makes the community aware that having many children that you can't afford to raise is not a good idea. Gone are those days where many children were appreciated. Nowadays life is very expensive.

## **4. PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATION: PROCESS**

### **4.1 Variety of narrative forms**

This narrative has one narrative form. It is known as the comedy-romance narrative (Gergen, p. 197, fig. 8.2). This narrative has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

### **4.2 Micro narrative**

This doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows that the narrative only covers the events around the children.

### **4.3 Nesting of narrative**

Nesting is not applicable because there is only one narrative.

## **5. PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **5.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that she has got more than expected number of children, and life doesn't go well for them. The husband loses his work, he deserts his family, kids resorts to prostitution, two of his kids die, and she ends up raising too many children.



## **5.2 Progressive narrative**

There is a progressive change in the narrator because she decides to leave her husband alone and she works as a domestic worker. She is now able to nourish her kids the way she wanted. Life goes well for the woman and her kids. They have direction in their new life after the father deserts them.

## **6. INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

### **6.1 Moral evaluation**

Even though the narrator isn't co-operative with her husband, she wants to appear as an honest person to his community by doing what her mother and the community itself encourages her to do. So, her community evaluates her as an honest person.

### **6.2 Interminable negotiation**

The identify of the narrator as a person who sticks to what she believes in e.g. continuation of the family as it is expected from Christians and her culture can be sustained by the community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because of her honesty towards her believes.

### **6.3 Reciprocal identities**

The narrator continues her family with the hope that her husband will appreciate that because it's expected from their culture.

## **7. EMOTIONS**

- (a) This narrative convey the emotions of anger, despair, and resentment. She experiences the feeling of complete loss after the death of her two daughters and when her husband left her for another woman.
- (b) Yes, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who just lost her two daughters and her husband to feel angry and despair.
- (c) The emotional expression in this narrative are meaningful because neglecting the family like that even during the death of a person's children it's heartbreaking. And choosing another woman over a person's family it's enough to make the narrator feel hurt and bitter.
- (d) Being left with eight children and not getting support in time of need, e.g. during the death of her two daughters made the narrator hostile. Hostility is viewed as a normal thing within the narrator's culture.



## SECOND ANALYSIS

### THE ABUSED WIFE

*Tsa bophelo baka lenyalong, nka ngola buka ka tsona. Hoba re nyalane, re ile ra dula habo nako e ka etsang dikgwedi tse tharo. Ka ba le ngwana wa bobedi hobane o ile a nkimisa ngwana wa pele pele re nyalana. Ra fumana ntlo Rocklands. Rocklands e ne e le sebaka seo se neng se tumme ka hore banna le basadi ba a hlalana ha ba fihla ho sona. Re dutse dilemo tse tharo ho ntse ho le monate, a nrata, a mpitsa sweetie ebile a nthusa ho hlatswa diaparo. Neng-neng ka utlwa ho se ho na le dikobiso ho thwe, le a tseba hore monna wa mane hukung o jele phehla.*

*Hanyane hanyane monna enwa a fetoha. A fihla hae bosiu, ha ke mmotsa hore o tswa kae a re o tswa jwaleng. O ne a se a sa mpitse sweetie jwalo ka pele. Ka makala, ka ipotsa hore na e be lenyalo ke ntho e jwang. Nako ha e ntse e tsamaya, ha ke ne ke mmotsa hore na o tswa kae o ne a se a nkotla ka ditebele a ntahle fatshe. Ke ngalle ha bona, matsale a re ngwanaka, robala re tla buisana le yena hosane. Ba mmitse, ho buisanwe le yena taba di loke. Ke kgutlele hae.*

*Ka mora dibeke tse tharo, a qalelle hape ka ho fihla bosiu hae, ho nwa le ho robala koo. Jwale ke ne ke se ke sa mmotse, ke mo sheba feela. A hane le ha ke se ke sa mmotse a ntjhapele hore na ha ke mmotse ke eng hore ha o tswa kae ha e se be ke ne ke e na le banna.*

*Ke hopola ka letsatsi le leng a fihla hoseng ka hora ya leshome a robetse koo, a fumana ke hlapile ke le motle ke apere mose a mosweu ke ntse ke pheha. Ka se ke ka mmotsa hore na o tswa kae hobane ke ne ke se ntse ke bona hore monna enwa ha a sa mphetla. Ke moo a seng a re hei sefebe, o bo so tswa kae ka mese e mesweu eo ke sa e tsebeng le ho e tseba? E be e se e ba kga-kgan-kgan-kgang monna a mfofela a nkotla a notletse monyako, a nkile botlolo ya sepritsi a nnyanyatsa ka sona. Ka hweletsa batho hore batlo nthusa. Jwale re ne re tsekisana mollo hore a seke a o laeta. Batho ba fihla ba roba lemati ba nthusa. Ka bitsa maponesa. Maponesa a tla ho mo laesha, ra lo ngola statement. Ha re se re qetile ho ngola statement, ra kgutlele hae.*

*Ha re fihla hae, lerato lee la ha satane, o se a ngekisa hore ke qhale nyewe o ne a nkuwe ke maikutlo, mme a ke ke a hlola a etsa ntho e jwalo ke mo tshwarele. Ha mapolesa a se a tla ho mo kwalla, ke ha ke se ke re tjhee, re ya tshwarelana le monna enwa wa ka. Ke qhala kgetsi, ha a satla hlola a etsa ntho eo hape. Mapolesa a kgutla a maketse.*

*Ka mora dibeke tse tharo, a qala hape. Kgetlong lena, o ne a se a tla le batho bana ba hae ha ka. Hobana ke ne ke sa sebetse, ke ne ke kgona ho loha di doele tsa ulu, e be jwale o tla ba bontsha hore na ke loha dintho tse jwang. E be ke ba etsetsa tee. Ha ba tsamaya, o ne a tsamaya le bona mme a kgutle ka la hosane. Ha ke botsa e be o re o ne a tauwe mme a robala ha motswalle wa hae ka ho tshaba ho tsamaya a le mong hara mpa ya bosiu.*

*Ka letsatsi le leng a mpehelletsa terene e yang Gauteng hore ke ye teng ke lo shebella bolo ya maoto le motswalle wa hae wa lelapa le mosadi wa hae mme yena a re ha a na ho kgona ho ya bolong o tla be a theohetse. Ho sala hwa hae ho ile hwa mmakatsa, empa ka*



*nqa e nngwe ke ile ka thaba hobane ke ne ke nahana hore jwale o a loka kanthe mehlolo e satla. Re tsamaile le metswalle ena ya hae, ha bolo e tswa, ra kgutlela hae.*

*Ke fihlile hae ka hora ya bone hoseng. Ka kokota monyako. Monna a mpotsa hore ke mang mme ka mo jwetsa. O nkile nako e telele a sa bule lemati. Sena se ile sa mmakatsa haholo. Ntlo ya rona e ne e kentswe di buglar proof. Ka hoo, ha e ba ho ne ho ena le motho e mong ka tlung ya keneng ka phoso, ho ne ho se moo a tla tswang le teng. Ka mmotsa hore ke ka lebaka lang a dieha ho tlo bula lemati, a re o sa ntsane a tena. Ka mora nako e telele a bula. Ka hla ka belaela, a ntshwara a re re ye ka kamoreng. Ka mmotsa hore ke ho tloha neng nkileng ka kopa thuso ya ho iswa kamoreng. Ke tla ikisa. Ke ile ka sheba ka diphaposing tse ding hore ke eng se entseng hore monna enwa a tshohe tjena. O ile a nthiba a re re lo robala. Ha ke re mahlo tloha, ka bona ngwanana e mong wa bao ba neng ba hlola ba tihaketse ha ka mona a ipatile ka mora tafole. Ho ya ka moo a neng a tshohile ka teng, o ne a bile a tshwere diaparo tse ding ka matsoho, ho ne ho hlakile hore ba ne ba robetse mmoho. Ke ne ke sa kgolwe mahlo a ka. Ke ile ka nka thipa ka leka ho mo hlaba empa monna wa ka a ntshwara ka thata mme ngwanana a tswa a baleha. Ka hlaba monna ka thipa eo letsohong. Ke ne ke ipotsa hore na e be monna eo o sa nthata na ha e le mona a le sebete sa ho tlo robala le mosadi e mong betheng ya ka.*

*Letsatsi le hlahlamang ka ya ha matsale ho ba bolella ka ketsahalo eno. Monna wa ka o ile a nshanotsa hore ha a etsa ntho eo. Bomatsale ba ile ba bua le yena ka thata ba ba ba mo kopa hore a tlohele ho theola seriti saka ka mokgwa oo.*

*Kamora moo, monna ya ba o a fetella ka bofebe. Ha ka ne ke ya batswading ba ka ho kopa thuso, ba ne ba re ke mamelle dintho di tla loka. Ba re ba tswa moo le bona. Dintho di ile tsa fetoha ha monna wa ka a fihla lapeng, o ile a bolella mme hore ha a re o bapala le nna ke se ke ngala mme ke mo etseletsa ka maka. O ne a re ha ke sa kgutlele hae o tla dula le nna moo heso. Mme ha a utlwa tseo, a nteleka a re:*

*Apha kwam andihlali nabenyane abafazi. Hamba uye kwakho kaloku. Andina kulala nomkhwe nyana nditye iinkomo zabantu.*

*Jwale ke ile ka tlameha ho kgutlela ha ka le monna hobane mme o ne a nteleka le yena. Ke ne ke sena boikgethelo. Re ne re lwana letsatsi le tjabang le le dikelang.*

*Ka letsatsi le leng monna wa ka o ile a nlelekisa ka kgarafu are o batla ho nkgola letheke. Eitse ha mme e mong a bona seno, a mpotsa hore na ke mamelletse eng, na ke batla ho qetella ke shwele na. Ke ile ka mamella ho dula le yena hobane ke ne ke mo rata. Ka lehlohonolo, ba na ba ka ba babedi ba ne ba dula le matsale ba sa bone tsena tsohle.*

*Ke ile ka hlokomela hore ke phela ka bodutu, ya ba ke nka qeto ya ho ntshetsa dithuto tsa ka pele le ho leka ho beha kelello ya ka nthong e nngwe ho na le ho dula ke tshwenyeha ka monna enwa ya nkutlwisang bohloko. Ka bomadimabe, o ne a ya moo sekolong ho ya nthohaka teng. O ne a re ke isitse bofebe moo. Ka lehlohonolo, ke ile ka pasa grade 11 le 12 mme ka ya koletjheng ya botitjhere. Ha ho ne ho etsahala hore re lwane, e be ke ya heso, tsatsi le latelang ke ya koletjheng o ne a sa thehele, o ne a ya koletjheng ho ya nthohakela teng hara baithuti ba bang.*

*Ka 1989 ra lo dula ka Tau. Re ile ra dieha ho lo dula ntlong eo hobane o ne a sa batle ho ba hole le dikgarebe tsa hae. Di ne di twaetse ho ema hekeng ya ka e be ba a hweletsa*



*ba re ke tlo bona ba tsamaya le monna wa ka. Just like that. Monna wa ka o ne a tlwaetse ho mpitsa masihlalisane ha a na le bona. Ka hoo, ba ne ba sa ntlhomphe. Ke ne ke mo rata haholo. Ke ile ka ba ka ya ba buelling, basebeletsing ba setjhaba, batswading le sepoleseng ho kopa thuso ka tshepo ya hore mohlomong ka letsatsi le leng o tla fetoha mme e be motho ya lokileng, monna ya nang le lerato le ntate wa bana ba hae. Ka nako tseo ha o ne o tshwarisa monna, maponesa a ne a o tsheha a re nkile ka bona kae mosadi a tshwarisa monna ke re ke tla feptjwa ke mang?*

*Ka 1991, ke ha ke ima ngwana wa boraro e le selemo sa ka sa ho qetela koletjheng. Ke ne ke utlwile bohloko ebile ke nahana ho ntsha mpa. Ke ne ke bona ho se bohlokwa ho etsa ngwana le motho ya sa hloleng a nthata. Empa ke ntho e tlwaelehleng ho etsa thobalano le ha le ntse le qwaketsana ka mantswe. Dintho di ile tsa mpefala le ho feta. O ne a re ngwana ha se wa hae. Re ne re robala diphaposing tse fapaneng ho tloha ke le mokgatjhane ho fihlela ke pepa.*

*Selemo se latelang ka fumana mosebetsi wa botitjhere mapolasing. Se neng se etsa hore ke nne ke dule le yena, ke ya kgolwa ke lebaka la hore o ne a mpha mokgolo wa hae kaofela ha a ne a kgotse hore ke hlokomele bana. Empa morao tje, o ne a mpha ebile a o nka hape a lo o senya jwaleng le dikgarebeng.*

*Letsatsi la ho qetela leo ke neng ke qetela ho isa ditletlobo ho matsale, ke mohla a buwang a tenehile a re ke eng ke sa hlale monna hobane ha re dudisane hamonate, ke phehelletse eng. A re yena o tennwe ke di tlelagete tsa mehla ena.*

*Ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho tsamaela ruri mohla monna wa ka a nlelekisang ka thipa bosiu bohle a re o batla ho mpolaya. A re ha ke sa batle ho tsamaya, ke tla tswa ke tsamaya ka mokokotlo. A re ke mo kentse vuil siek hobane ke ne ke robalwa ke banna dipolasing. O ne a sa tsotelle ho bolella batho hore ke mo kentse mafu a thobalano, empa bosiu o ne a batla hore re etse thobalano. Ke ile ka lo mohlala, re ne re kaba le dilemo tse leshome le metso e mene re nyalanane, ho tloha ka 1980 ho fihlela ka di 04-12-1994.*

*Ke ile ka fuwa bana hobane yena o ne a se a lahlehetswe ke mosebetsi ka lebaka la ho nwa haholo. Ke ile ka phela ka thabo le bana ba ka ho se ho se na motho ya nkotlang, ya nthohakang, kapa ho na ho nkutlisa bohloko. Yena o ne a utlwile bohloko haholo, o ile a ba a tshepisa le ho mpatlela ngaka ya Sesotho e tla mpolaya ka lefu la koloi. Ke ka moo tsa bophelo baka ba lenyalo di bileng ka teng.*

I can write a book with my experiences in my marital life. After we got married, we stayed at his parents' place for about three months. I had a second child because he impregnated me with the first child before we got married. We found a house at Rocklands. Rocklands was well known of high divorce rate. We stayed happily for three years. He loved me, he used to call me sweetie, and he also helped me with the washing. After a while I heard people talking sarcastically saying, do you know that that man staying at the corner has eaten "phehla".

Gradually this man changes. He arrived home late. When I asked him about his whereabouts, he told me that he was from the shebeen. He no longer calls me sweetie as before. I was amazed, I asked myself how exactly the marriage is. As time goes on, he punched me to such an extent that I fell down when I asked him about his whereabouts. I



reported that to his parents. My mother-in-law said that they'll talk to him the following day. They called him and they talked to him. Thereafter I went back home.

After three weeks, he started again arriving late home, drinking, and sleeping around. I was no longer asking him about his whereabouts, I just overlooked him. Even though I ignored him, he beats me for not asking him about his whereabouts. He said I don't ask him about his whereabouts because I've been with men.

I remember one day he slept around and came home the following day at ten o'clock in the morning, he found me clean and beautiful and I was wearing my white dress and I was busy cooking. I didn't ask him about his whereabouts because it was clear that this man doesn't love me any longer. When he realizes that I don't say anything, he said hey you bitch, where the hell have you been with the white dress I even don't know? The quarrel started and he beats me with a door locked, he held a bottle full of spirit and he poured me with it. I screamed for help. We fought over a box of matches so that he shouldn't lit it. The people broke the door and helped me. I called the police. The police came to fetch him and we wrote the statement. After giving our statement, we went back home.

When we arrived home, this Satan's love, he talked nicely with me and asked me to drop the charges because he was under emotional pressure. He promised not to do that again. He asked for my forgiveness. When the police came to arrest him, I said no, we made peace with my husband. I drop the charges, he won't do that again. The police returned amazed.

After three weeks, he started again. This time he came with those people of his at my place. Because I was a housewife, I used to knit a woolen doel, and he would then showed them what am I capable of doing. Then I would make them tea. When they leave, he accompanied them and he will be back the following day. When I asked him where he had been, he responded by saying that he was drunk and he slept over his friend's house because he was afraid of walking alone in the middle of the night.

One day he booked me a train to Johannesburg to watch a soccer match with his family friend and his wife, and he said he won't be able to accompany us to the match because he'll be on duty. His stay surprised me but on the other side I became happy because I thought that he was now becoming okay but miracles were still coming. We went along with those friends of his, after the match, we returned home.

I arrived home at four o'clock in the morning. I knocked at the door. My husband asked me who I am and I told him. He took a long time before he opened the door. That surprised me very much. Our house had burglar proofs. So, if there was somebody in the house who entered by mistake, there was no way to escape. I asked him why he delayed to open the door, he said that he was busy putting on the clothes. After a long time he opened the door. I was suspicious, he held me and asked me to go to bed. I asked him since when did I needed help to go to the bedroom. I'll go there by myself. I looked in the other rooms to find out what made this man so frightened. He stopped me and asked me to go to bed. When I look around, I saw one of the girls who were used to visit us hiding behind the table. The way she was frightened, she was even holding other clothes with hands, it was clear that they were sleeping together. I didn't believe my eyes. I took a knife and tried to stab her but my husband held me firmly and the girl ran away. I stabbed



my husband with that knife on his hand. I asked myself whether this man still loves me, how could he be so brave to sleep with another woman on my bed.

The following day I went to my parents-in-law to report that incident. My husband denied that he did that. My parents-in-law talked to him very firmly and asked him to stop degrading my dignity like that.

Thereafter he became a worse adulterer. When I go to my parents to ask for help, they were used to say that I must persevere everything will be okay. They said they had been there too. Things changed when my husband arrived, he told my mother that when he plays with me I go away and I make false accusation about him. He said that if I don't go home with him he will stay with me at our place. When mother heard that, she chased me and said:

I won't stay with other women in my house. Go to your house. I won't sleep with my son-in-law in the same house, we ate their lobola.

So I was forced to go back to my house with my husband because my mother was chasing me away. I had no choice. We were fighting every day and night.

One day my husband chased me with a spade because we quarreled. He said he wanna cut my waist with it. When a certain woman saw that, she asked me why am I persevering that much, do I want to end up dead. I persevered to stay with him because I loved him. Fortunately, my two kids were staying with my parents-in-law and they never saw all that.

I realized that I was living a lonely life, and I decided to further my studies and try go focus on something else rather than worrying about that annoying husband. He also went to my school and insulted me there and said that I went there for adultery. I passed grade 11 and 12 successfully and I also went to teacher's training college. If it happened that we fight, and I went to my parent's place and go to the college the next day, he won't go to work, he'll go to the college and insulted me in front of other students.

In 1989 we went to stay at Tau. We delayed to go and stay in that house because he didn't want to be far from his girlfriends. They were used to stand near my gate and shouted like this: Come and see, we're leaving with your husband. Just like that. My husband was used to call me "vat en sit" when he was with them. So, they didn't respect me. I loved him so much. I even went to lawyers, social workers, parents and police to ask for help with the hope that maybe one day, he'll change and be a better person, loving husband and father. In those days, when you arrest a man for his wrongful act, the police used to laugh at you and say since when did a woman arrest her husband, who will provide me with food.

In 1991, I became pregnant with my third child, it was my final year at the college. I was hurt, I even thought of aborting. To me it wasn't important to have a child with someone who doesn't love me anymore. But it's normal to have sex with your husband even if you quarrel a lot. Things went from bad to worse. He denied the baby. We slept in different bedrooms from conception until after the birth of a child.

The following year I got a teaching post at the farm. What made me to persevere staying with him I think was that he used to give me all his salary so that I should be able to look



after the children. But lately, he used to give me and then took it again and wasted it on beers and girlfriends.

The last time I stopped complaining to my mother-in-law was when she talked fed up saying why didn't I divorce my husband because we were not living harmoniously with each other. What am I persevering for. She is sick and tired with our daily complaints.

I decided to go for ever the day my husband chased me with a knife for the whole night saying that he wanted to kill me. He claimed that if I don't wanna go, I'll leave that place moving on my back. He claimed that I infected him with a sexually transmitted disease because I was having sex with farm men. He didn't mind to tell the neighbours that I infected him with STD's, but at night he wanted me to have sex with him. I divorced him, we have been together for about fourteen years, from 1980 to the 4<sup>th</sup>-12-1994.

I was given custody of children because he was no longer working because he was now drinking heavily. I lived happily ever after together with my kids with no one who beats, insult or hurts me. He was very angry, he even promised to find me a witch doctor which will kill me with a car accident. That was how my marital life had been.



## **1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNT**

### **1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure**

1.1.1 This narrative relates to the experiences of a woman who was abused by her husband. The woman's story consists of three episodes in this regard. The first episode is her three years of happy marriage. The second episode relates to the abuse of her husband. The third episode is about her change. These episodes are discussed below:

#### **1. Three years of happy marriage**

The narrator's husband loved her so much. He called her sweetie and he also helped her with the washing. Everything was running smoothly the first three years of their marriage.

#### **2. Abuse of husband**

He visited shebeens, his love towards his wife disappeared, his wife was beaten by him. Wife left him but returned after help from her parents-in-law. They quarrel with bottle of spirits. The police were called but she withdrew the charge. He entertained girlfriend in her home. She stabbed him but sought help from her parents-in-law. Her husband kept on with adultery. She sought help from her mother but they were chased away. Fighting continued with attack with a spade but there was no reproach: she still loved him. Her husband insulted her at school and college even her husband's girlfriends, her husband denied parentage of third child. She complained to mother-in-law: she advised divorce. She was chased with a knife and she got divorce and custody of children.

#### **3. Wife changed**

- 3.1 She went to school and college.
- 3.2 She took up teaching but the beating didn't stop.
- 3.3 She divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

### **1.2 Endpoint: The theme of the narrative**

The theme of this narrative is woman abuse. This man abuses his wife physically, e.g. when he pours her with a spirit with an attempt of burning her and when he beats her. Emotionally, when he insults her e.g. by calling her a bitch, by cheating on her and by degrading her dignity by telling his neighbours that she has infected him with sexually transmitted diseases.

### **1.3 Ordering of events**

#### **1.3.1 Sequence**

This narrative has three events. There is a sequence within events. Firstly, the narrator was abused by her husband to such an extent that she went to school and college to



further her education. Secondly, she took up teaching but the beating didn't stop. Thirdly, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

### **1.3.2 Duration**

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about fourteen years, from 1980 to December 1994.

### **1.4 Stability of identity**

This woman is a strong character because she went to school and college to further her education. She took up teaching and she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

### **1.5 Causal linkage**

The events in the narrative are causally linked. The events show the relationship of cause and effect.

Firstly, the narrator's husband abused her to such an extent that she went to school and college to further her education. Secondly, she took up teaching but the beating didn't stop as the result, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

### **1.6 Demarcation signs**

The narrator uses the demarcation signs at the beginning and at the end of the narrative. The signals that indicate the beginning of the story are the following words: I can write a book with my experiences in my marital life. And the ones that indicate the end of the story are the following words: That was how my marital life had been. These words show exactly that the story ends.

## **2. NARRATIVE FORM**

The story has a regressive and progressive narrative form.

### **2.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrative is regressive in the sense that the narrator was abused by her husband in this manner:

- (a) He visited shebeens, his love disappeared, wife was beaten by him.
- (b) They quarreled with bottle of spirits.
- (c) He entertained girlfriend in her home.
- (d) He kept on with adultery.
- (e) Fighting continued with attack with a spade.
- (f) He insulted her at school and college even her husband's girlfriends, her husband denied parentage of third child.
- (g) She was chased with a knife.



## **2.2 Progressive narrative**

It's progressive because his wife changed. She went to school and college to further her education, she took up teaching, and she also divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

## **3. SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time**

The sequence within the events is as follow: Firstly, the narrator's husband abused her and she decided to go to school and college. Secondly, she took up teaching but her husband continued to abuse her. Thirdly, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

### **3.2 Social accounting**

The social purpose that this narrative fulfils is that of self-justification. She uses these words: This Satan's love. Which means if she didn't love him, she could have left him. She loves her husband so much, these words prove that: I even went to the lawyers, social workers, parents and police for help with the hope that he'll be a better person, loving husband and a father to his children.

### **3.3 Narrative is true**

This narrative narrates true events in the life of married couples. In most marriages, at the early years of marriage, everything runs smoothly. As time goes on, the relationship becomes unpleasant. If the husband is abusive, cheats and doesn't respect his wife, the relationship is bound to fail like this one and ends in divorce.

## **4. PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATION: PROCESS**

### **4.1 Variety of narrative form**

The narrative shows one narrative form. This narrative form is also known as the comedy-romance narrative. It has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

### **4.2 Micro-narrative**

This narrative is a micro-narrative because it doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows the events around the narrator's marriage.

### **4.3 Nesting**

No nesting because there are no two plots.



## **5. PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **5.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrator solicits sympathy because her husband abuses her physically by beating her, emotionally by insulting and cheating on her.

### **5.2 Progressive narrative**

There is a progressive change in the narrator because she has decided to go to school to further her education, she divorced her husband, and she is given the custody of the children.

## **6. INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

### **6.1 Moral evaluation**

The narrator will be evaluated as an honest person because even though her husband abused her that much, she still loved him and she sought help from her mother and her mother-in-law but her husband's abuse didn't stop.

### **6.2 Interminable negotiation**

The identity of the narrator as a strong character e.g., when she changed for the better by going to school and college to further her education, by taking up teaching, and by divorcing her abusive husband can be sustained by the community. The woman will be seen as a valid person within her community.

### **6.3 Reciprocal identities**

The narrator goes to her mother to complain about her abusive man with the hope that she'll talk to him, but her mother doesn't support her, she asks her to go back to her husband because they ate his lobola, and she (mother) can't sleep with son-in-law in the same house. The mistress of the narrator's husband told the narrator that she leave with her husband just to make her jealous and furious. She wanted the narrator to realize that her husband doesn't love her anymore. The narrator's husband goes with his mistress openly to show his wife that his heart belongs to another. The narrator's mother-in-law talked furiously with her in order to convince her that her husband doesn't love her any longer. Narrator's mother forced her to go back with her husband because she viewed divorce as a disgrace.

## **7. EMOTIONS**

- (a) The narrator experiences the emotion of anger and resentment after she found out that her husband cheated on her. She showed this by stabbing him with a knife.



- (b) Yes, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who is betrayed like this to be angry.
- (c) The emotional expression are meaningful because being betrayed to go to watch a soccer match far from home while your husband enjoys sex with another woman in your house is sickening.
- (d) Hostility is present in this narrative. The narrator became hostile when she found another woman in her house so early in the morning. In Sesotho culture, hostility is acceptable. It's a normal thing to be angry and hostile to find out that your husband is seeing other women.



### THIRD ANALYSIS

#### THE NEGLECTED WIFE

*Re bile mmoho ho tloha ka 1971 feela a ntse a dula Gauteng mo a neng a sebetsa teng. O ne a tla hae ka mora dikgwedi tse tsheletseng kapa dilemo tse pedi. Ho tloha moo o dutse dilemo tse tsheletseng a sa tle hae, ho tloha ka 1972 ho fihlela 1978. Ka morao ho moo, o ile a tla hae mme ra nyalana semmuso. Empa le ka morao ho moo, mokgwa oo wa hae ha a ka a o tlohela. O ile a nna a dula moo Vereeniging hape.*

*Ke ile ka ba le ngwana wa monna e mong ka 1982 a ba a feta dihoranyana ka mora tswalo, empa ha a ka a tseba ka taba eo. O ne a ntshokodisa le ka tjehelete. O ne a mpha R150,00 ka kgwedi a re ha a na tjehelete, tjehelete ya e fumanang e nyane.*

*Se neng se nkutlwisahloko ke hore o ne a sa batle hore ke mo tjhakele moo a dulang teng. Ho fihlela le kajeno lena o ntse a sebetsa ho na moo Vereeniging ha a batle hore ke mo tjhakele moo a dulang teng. Ho na jwale o re o se a sebetsa mmarakeng ho na moo Vereeniging. Ha ke so ka ke bona pay slip ya hae. Ha ke tsebe mokgolo wa hae. Ha ke tsebe le dipolicy tsa hae. Ha ke tsebe letho ka yena. Ka mehla ha ke batla ho tseba moo a dulang re ya qabana, o re re ka mpa ra hlalana. O re moo ke ha hae ebile ke mosebetsing wa makgowa, ho ka se kgonahale hore ke ye moo.*

*Ke ile ka mmotsa hore na ha ho ka etsahala hore a hloka hore ke tla etsa jwang ke sa tsebe moo a dulang le moo a sebetsang. Ka 1990, nkile ka ya moo a neng a sebetsa teng ka mahahapa o ne a nthohake hampe ha ke fihla moo. O ile a re ke tla ke matha ka mora hae ke batlang. Haeba ke batla ho nyalwa ke tsamaye ke lo nyalwa ke kgaohane le yena. A njwetsa hore ke mo tlwaela masepa.*

*Mookamedi wa hae o ile a mo eletsa ka hore a batle sebaka moo nka dulang teng solanka re tsebe ho buisana. A hana a re ke tla ke matha ka mora hae ha a tsebe hore ke tlo batlang, yena o tlile ho sebeletsa bana ba hae. Ke ile ka ikgutlela e le hore selemong seo ha a mpha tjehelete selemo kaofela hobane ke ne ke sebetsa Bloemfontein.*

*E ne e ye re ha a tlile matsatsing a phomolo ha nkare ha ho na phoofo, o ne a mpha tjehelete ya phoofo feela, ha ke re ha ho na tswekere, o ne a mpha ya tswekere feela.*

*Ke ile ka phela bophelo boo ho fihlela ke etsa qeto ya ho lo hlala. Ke ile ka ya makgotleng a dinyewe, empa ke ile ka hloleha hobane e ne ere ha ke fihla teng, ba be ba re ke ye basebeletsing ba setjhaba, ha ke fihla teng, ba be ba re ke ye ha komisinare. Ha ke fihla teng ke ba jwetsa hore ke ya hlala, ba be ba re ho na le ho hlala, nka mpa ka re a sapote bana. Ke ile ka mosapotisa, o ile a sapota dikgwedi tse tharo feela a bolela hore o kgola R60,00 ka beke. Ba ile ba re haeba o kgola R60,00, a sapote bana ka R50,00 a nke R10,00. O ile a sapota dikgwedinyana feela a e tlohela. Eitse ha ke kgutlela lekgotleng la disapoto, ke ha ba re ba se ba batla aterese enang le nomoro ya moo a sebetsang ha ba sa batla aterese ya lebokose la poso. Jwale, ke ne ke sa tsebe diaterese tsa mosebetsing, ka hoo, ha a ka a hlola a sapota bana hobane ho ne ho sa tsejwe aterese ya hae. Le kajeno o ntse a iphelela moo.*



*Morao tjena ke ile ka boela ka buisana le yena ke mo jwetsa hore ke ya kgolwa hore jwale o hodile re rarolle mathata a rona. Ka mmotsa hore na o sa ntsane a le kgahlano le hore ke tsebe moo a sebetsang le moo a dulang. Haeba a sa le kgahlano, ke etse jwang ha a ka hlokahala ke sa tsebe moo a dulang le moo a sebetsang. Ke ha a re ho na le hore ke tsebe moo a dulang, re ka mpa ra hlalana. Ke ile ka mo jwetsa hore matsatsing ana re na le ditokelo tsa ho tseba hore na molekane wa hao o kgola bokae le tse ding tse ngata. O ile a re ditokelo tseo tsa rona ke tsona tse re sent seng.*

*O mpha R800,00 ka kgwedi ho na jwale. Ke na le ngwana wa moshemane eo a hlohang kgalemelo ya rona re le babedi. Empa mohla a tlleng hae, ha ke mo kopa hore a nthuse ho kgalema ngwana, ha a etse jwalo. Ho na jwale o na le dilemo tse pedi a sa tle phomolong. Bothata bo bong ba hae ke hore ha a batle ho botswa letho.*

*Ha ke sa sebetsa Bloemfontein ho na jwale empa ke ntse ke kgona ho phela hobane ke rekisa dibiri, sakerete, dibeko, snoek fish braai, ebile ke lemme le jareteng ya ka mona ke rekisa le meroho hore bophelo bo nne bo tswelle. Jwale ke bona Modimo o ntse o nketsa hantle hobane ke bona o ntse o mpha matla. Batho ba a reka mme ke kgona ho reka motlakase, parafine, dijo, le tse ding tse ngata. Ke bona bophelo ba ka bo ntse bo tswella hantle ebile ho hang ha ke sa na taba le yena hore na o a dula moo kapa o etsa jwang ke bona ke se na bothata ba hae hobane ke bona ke iphelela hantle. Modimo o mphile matsoho, ke kgona ho a sebedisa ho etsa eng kapa eng ho iphidisa. Jwale ke bophelo boo ke seng ke iphelela bona ho fihlela kajeno.*

We have been together since 1971 but he was still staying at Gauteng where he was working. He was used to come home after six months or two years. From there, he stayed there for six years without coming home, from 1972 to 1978. Thereafter, he came home and we married officially. Even thereafter, he didn't leave that habit of his. He continued to stay at Vereeniging.

I had another man's child in 1982 who passed away few hours after his birth, but he didn't know about that. I was struggling to get his money. He was used to give me R150,00 per month, claiming that he doesn't have money, he earns a low salary.

What hurt me so much was the fact that he didn't want me to visit him where he was staying. Up to date he is still working at Vereeniging, he doesn't want me to visit him there. He says presently he is working at a market there at Vereeniging. I haven't seen his pay-slip. I don't know his salary. I don't know his policies. I don't know anything about him. Every time when I want to know where he stays we quarrel, he says we better divorce. He says Vereeniging is where he stays and it's his working place, it won't be possible for me to go there.

I asked him what would I do should he die if I don't know where he stays and work. In 1990 I went to his working place against his wish, he insulted me very badly when I arrived there. He said I come running after him, what do I really want. If I wanna get married I must go and do so and leave him alone.

His senior advised him to find me a place to stay meanwhile we are busy solving our problems. He disagreed and say I come running after him, he doesn't know what do I want, he is there to work for his children. I returned and that year he didn't send me any money for the whole year, just because I was working in Bloemfontein.



If he was on leave, if it happens that I asked him money for mealie meal, he was used to give me the money that will only buy mealie meal, if I say there is no sugar, he was used to give me the money that will only buy sugar.

I lived that life until I decided to divorce him. I went to magistrate court, but I didn't succeed because when I arrived there, they advised me to go to the social workers. When I arrived there, they asked me to go to the commissioner. When I arrived there and told them that I wanna divorce, they said instead of divorcing him, I better made him maintain his children. I made him maintain his children, but he did that for only three months because he said that he earns only R60,00 per week. They told him that if he earns R60,00 per week, he must maintain his children with R50,00 and be left with R10,00. He maintained for few months and leave it. When I go back to the maintenance court, they asked for his physical address not the one with a box number. I didn't know his physical address, so, he no longer maintain the children because his physical address was unknown. Up to date he is still living there.

Recently I talked to him again telling him that I hope he is now a grown up, so we can resolve our problems. I asked him whether he is still against the fact that I must know where he works and stays. If he is still against that, what must I do if it might happen that he dies without knowing where he stays and works. He said instead of knowing where he stays, we better divorce. I told him that nowadays we have the rights to know how much your partner earns per month and many other things. He said we are spoiled by those rights of us.

Now he gives me R800 per month. I have a son who needs both of our support. But when he is at home, when I asked him to help me to admonish the child, he doesn't do that. Now he has never been on leave for two years. His other problem is that he doesn't want to be questioned with anything.

Presently, I no longer work in Bloemfontein but I'm still able to survive because I'm selling beers, cigarette, vat cakes, snoek fish braai, I also have vegetable gardens in my yard. I also sell vegetables so that life should go on. So God is on my side because He gives me strength. People buy these things and I'm able to buy electricity, paraffin, food and many other things. My life goes on smoothly and I totally don't give a damn about him whether he stays there or whatever he does I don't worry about him any more because I've realized that my life is fine. God gave me hands, and I'm able to use them. So, this is the life that I live up to date.



## **1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNT**

### **1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure**

- 1.1.1 This narrative relates the experiences of a woman who is neglected by her husband for about thirty-four years. This life story does not give clear indications of events following each other, but it seems to concentrate on certain episodes in her marriage. Four such episodes have received attention:

#### **1. The husband**

He is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while his wife stayed in the Free State. He visits home irregularly, e.g., once in six months or even two years and a period of six years from 1972 – 1978 went by without any visit from him. He is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging; he doesn't want any visit from his wife and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children: his wife mentioned the problem of a son where he wouldn't like to be involved in the discipline of the child.

#### **2. The wife**

She stayed with her husband from 1971 but only got married after 1978. When her husband is at work in Vereeniging in Gauteng, she stayed at home in the Free State. The husband only infrequently visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Her husband had no knowledge of this. However, she continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging and his circumstances did not allow her to go permanently to Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. She kept on feeling very uncertain and she tried a number of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances. In the end the wife accepted her circumstances. She did not divorce him but she kept on receiving maintenance from him. She now works as an informal trader supporting herself.

#### **3. Maintenance**

The wife had a continuous struggle to get maintenance from her husband. She initially received R50 per week. When she worked for a year in Bloemfontein she did not receive any maintenance from her husband. When the husband does visit home, he only gives money for specific items such as sugar, when asked for money. Eventually, the wife was advised to sue her husband for maintenance. She was awarded R50 per week, but she only received this for a few months. She couldn't get an order from the maintenance court because she did not have his physical address. Eventually this problem was solved and she now receives maintenance of R800 per month.



#### 4. Children

The narrator did not give the number of her children and this not clear how to judge her circumstances. The husband mentions children in the plural: **sebeletsa bana ba ka**. The wife also mentions more than one: **nka mpa ka re a sapote bana**. Only one child is explicitly mentioned, i.e., the son for whom she got no help in disciplining him.

#### 1.2 Endpoint: Theme of the narrative

The theme of the narrative is the neglected wife. This woman is neglected by her husband by not visiting her regularly, he visits home irregularly, e.g., once in six months, or two years and period of six years went by without any visit from him. He doesn't want any visit from his wife. When his wife visited him, she got insulted and chased home. He doesn't give his wife emotional support. He doesn't want to reveal his circumstances in Vereeniging to his wife. He is secretive about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't care about the raising of his children. His wife took legal actions to force him to maintain his children. He doesn't want to disclose any information about his circumstances to his wife.

#### 1.3 Ordering of events

##### 1.3.1 Sequence

There is not clear indication of events following each other in this life story, but these four episodes did receive attention:

#### 1. The husband

He is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while his wife stayed in the Free State. He visits home irregularly, e.g.; once in six months or even two years and a period of six years from 1972 – 1978 went by without any visit from him. He is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging; he doesn't want any visit from his wife and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children: his wife mentioned the problem of a son where he wouldn't like to be involved in the discipline of the child.

#### 2. The wife

She stayed with her husband from 1971 but only got married after 1978. When her husband is at work in Vereeniging in Gauteng, she stayed at home in the Free State. The husband only infrequently visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Her husband had no knowledge of this. However, she continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging and his circumstances did not allow her to go permanently to Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. She kept on feeling very uncertain and she tried a number



of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances. In the end the wife accepted her circumstances. She did not divorce him but she kept on receiving maintenance from him. She now works as an informal trader supporting herself.

### **3. Maintenance**

The wife had a continuous struggle to get maintenance from her husband. She initially received R50 per week. When she worked for a year in Bloemfontein she did not receive any maintenance from her husband. When the husband does visit home, he only gives money for specific items such as sugar, when asked for money. Eventually, the wife was advised to sue her husband for maintenance. She was awarded R50 per week, but she only received this for a few months. She couldn't get an order from the maintenance court because she did not have his physical address. Eventually this problem was solved and she now receives maintenance of R800 per month.

### **4. Children**

The narrator did not give the number of her children and this not clear how to judge her circumstances. The husband mentions children in the plural: *sebelelsa bana ba ka*. The wife also mentions more than one: *nka mpa ka re a sapote bana*. Only one child is explicitly mentioned, i.e., the son for whom she got no help in disciplining him.

#### **1.3.2 Duration**

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about thirty-four years.

#### **1.4 Stability of identity**

Even though the narrator's husband neglected her so much, she seems as a strong person because she accepted her circumstances and she is trying by all means to look after her children and to keep life going. She is doing everything possible to put food on the table, e.g., by working as an informal trader.

#### **1.5 Causal linkage**

The problem in this narrative is that the narrator's husband is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while the narrator stays in the Free State. Her husband only infrequently visited her with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982 and her husband had no knowledge of this. Her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging, she did go and visit him without his consent and she got insulted by him and chased home. The narrator tried a number of times to get her husband involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances, as a result the wife accepted her circumstances.



## **1.6 Demarcation signs**

There are no demarcation signs at the beginning of this story, but there are at the end of the story. These words: this is the life that I live up to date show clearly that this story ends.

## **2. NARRATIVE FORM**

The story has a regressive form.

### **2.1 Regressive narrative**

It's regressive in the sense that the narrator's husband seldom visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died shortly after birth. The narrator continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. Her husband is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children.

## **3. SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time**

This life story does not give clear indication of events following each other, but the following did receive attention: Firstly, the husband only infrequently visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Secondly, he is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging, he doesn't want any visit from his wife, his wife did go and visit him without his consent and she got insulted by him and chased home. Thirdly, the narrator kept on feeling very uncertain and she tried a number of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances and as a result, she accepted her circumstances.

### **3.2 Social accounting**

The social purpose which this narrative fulfills is self-identification. She identified herself as a mother and a neglected person. She is neglected by her husband who rarely visits her. Who doesn't want any visit from her. Who doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't give her emotional support, he doesn't care about the raising of his children.

### **3.3 The narrative is true**

This narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if you're married, and you don't make time to be with your partner, she/he will try by all means to fill that gap like in this marriage. This woman needed the love and warmth of her partner, and he failed to give her that love, so his wife found it somewhere else.



## **4. PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATION: PROCESS**

### **4.1 Variety of narrative forms**

This narrative has one narrative form. It is known as regressive narrative. It links together events so that the movement along the evaluative dimension over time is decremental.

### **4.2 Micro narrative**

This doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. The narrative only covers the events around the woman and her husband.

### **4.3 Nesting of narrative**

Nesting is not applicable because there is only one narrative.

## **5. PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **5.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that her husband only seldom visited her. He doesn't want any visit from her. When she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. His husband is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging, he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't care about the raising of his children.

### **5.2 Progressive narrative**

The narrator never really changed.

## **6. INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

### **6.1 Moral evaluation**

The narrator is evaluated as a dishonest person in her community. She portrayed herself as a neglected woman who eventually resorted in adultery and as a result, she had an illegitimate child. So, the narrator will be seen as invalid person in her community.

### **6.2 Interminable negotiation**

The identity of the narrator as a dishonest person cannot be sustained by her community. The narrator will be seen as invalid person within her community because of her dishonesty.

### **6.3 Reciprocal identities**

This story is centred around the narrator and her husband only. It doesn't say much about other character, e.g., the narrator's husband's senior. It tells us that this senior



unsuccessfully tried to make peace between them by advising his colleague to find his wife a place where they could resolve their problems.

## **7. EMOTIONS**

- (a) This narrative conveys the emotions of anger and despair. To be insulted by your husband in front of his colleagues when visiting him and not knowing about his financial matter and many other things about him is enough to make a person angry.
- (b) Yes, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who has been ill-treated this way to feel angry and despair.
- (c) The emotional expression in this narrative are meaningful because to stay with a man for about thirty-four years without knowing his salary, policies and where he works, it's heartbreaking.
- (d) Being neglected like this made the narrator hostile. Hostility is viewed as a normal thing within the narrator's culture.



## FOURTH ANALYSIS

### WOMAN ABUSE

*Qalong lenyalo la rona le bile monate. Re ne re ratana haholo. Ke ne ke sa le sekolong ha a nnyala. O ile a nkopa hore ke tlohele sekolo a ntshepisa hore o tla nkenya sekolo ha re se re nyalane. O ile a fela a phethisa ditshepiso tsa hae a nkgutlisetsa sekolong.*

*Ha ke ntse ke le sekolong, ke ile ka ima ngwana wa ka wa bobedi hobane o ile a nkimisa wa pele ke sa le lapeng. Bomatsale ba ile ba susumetsa monna wa ka hore a se hlole a ntumella ho tswelapele ka dithuto tsa ka hobane ke thabela ho etsa bana ho ena le ho ithuta. Ke ile ka amohela seo, ka tlohela sekolo ka itlhokomella bana baka. Hwa nna hwa ba monate pakeng tsa ka le monna, empa batswadi ba hae bona ba ne ba mo susumetsa ka dintho tse mpe. Ba ne ba re o tshaba mosadi, o rata mosadi, ebile o mamela mosadi dinthong kaofela. Empa nna ke ne ke amohetse hobane ke ne ke bona yena a eme le nna mme a sa fetohle, ke ka lebaka lena ke phetseng le yena dilemo tse leshome le metso e robedi hobane ke ne ke bona hore dintho tseo a di etsang, o wa di susumelletswa, ha se hore yena o a di rata.*

*Ha dilemo di ntse di feta, re ne re lwana, empa e ne e le ntwana e tlwaelehileng ya lelapa. Ke ne ke bona ka dinako tse ding hore o na le dikamano le basadi ba bang empa ke ntse ke bona hore o a nrata. Yena ha e sale e le motho ya ratang basadi, O ile a qetella moo e leng hore ha a sa na tlhompho ho nna. Ke tshepa hore ebile tshusumetso eo ya batswadi ba hae le metswalle ya bo ausi wa hae. A qetella a se a inehetse mekgweng eo e mebe a bona hore mosadi ha se ntho e tshwanetseng hore e hlompjhwane.*

*Dinitho di ile tsa tsamaya jwalo ho fihlela a ratana le mosadi wa motho ka 1993. Ka 1994, mosadi eno o ile a ba le ngwana le monna wa ka. Ntho e nkutlwisang bohloko ka monna wa ka ho na jwale ke hore mosading eo, ho bonahala hore o ne a se a sa mpatle hobane o ne a se a mpua hampe ho yena. A bolela ka moo a sa nnyalang ka teng ke itlisitseng. O a lebala hore ha ke ya mo qobella ho nnyala. Hae batswadi ba ka ba ne ba le bohale. Ba sa batle ha re ratana. Ha re ne re ratana, re ne re shapuwana. Ka hoo, ho ile hwa etsahala hore ka letsatsi le leng re tshokane le yena mme batswadi ba ka ba mpatla mme ba se mphumane. Eitse ha ke fihla, ba ile ba ntjhapa mme yena ke ha a etsa qeto ya ho nshobedisa hore ke se hlole ke shapjwa. Hobane le nna ke ne ke mo rata, ebile ke ba bothateng ba ho kgutlela hae ha ke tswa ho yena, ke ile ka dumela hore a nshobedise. Jwale ha a se a fihla ho nyatsi, ke ha a se a bua ka nna a re yena ha a nnyala ke nna ke itlisitseng le bohadi ha a bo ntsha, yena ha e sale a sa mpatle ke nna ke mo susumeditse hore a nnyale. Ke nnete bohadi ha a bontsha kaofela hobane batswadi ba hae ba ne ba mo susumetsa hore a se ntshe bohadi bo saletseng morao hobane ha ke ya ruteha, ha ke na lengolo la sehlopha sa leshome, ntho tse ngata tseo tse bohloko.*

*Monna wa ka o ile a hahela mosadi eo ntlo. Ha ke mo botsa hore na o sa nthata na ha e le mona a se a hahela basadi ba bang matlo ho ne ho sa be le dikarabo tse ntle. Re ne re qetella re lwana. O ne a se a ntelekisa ka thipa, ka nako e nngwe ka sethunya. E ne e ye e re ha a fihla hae a tswa nyatsing eo ya hae, a mpitse ka mabitso a mabe a re "ja" sefebe, ke o phuthile o le ntja kao etsa motho, ka re ke o Kenya sekolo wa hana sekolo. O ne a mpuela mantsoe ao a bohloko. O ne a re ngwana wa ka wa bobedi eo ke mo entseng ke le sekolong ha se wa hae, ke mo entseng le monna e mong. O ntlhekefeditse ka nako e telele yena. O ne a se a fetohle ka hohlehohle. Mosadi eo o ne a etsa tlhodisano*



*le nna. O ne a batla hore monna wa ka a mo etsetse ntho e nngwe le e nngwe eo ke neng ke ena le yona, mme monna wa ka o ne a phethisa. Bophelo boo ke bo phetseng ho tloha ka 1993 e bile bo bohloko hoo ke neng ke lakatsa ho hlala, empa ke ipotsa hore na ke tla be ke ya kae ka bana.*

*Ka Hlakubele 2002, monna wa ka ke ha a mpoella hore o ne a loya. Yena le nyatsi eo ya hae ba ne ba tsamaya dingakeng tsa boloi ba batla ho mpolaya, ba batla le ho bolaya monna wa nyatsi ya hae. Ba ne ba tshepisa ho nyalana. Qetellong nyatsi eo ya hae e ne e se e loya yena. Ke ka hoo a etsang qeto ya ho mpoella. A re ka letsatsi le leng o kile a tla le monatja oo a neng a o fuwe ke nyatsi ya hae a o tshela ka dijong. Ka mora moo ke ile ka kula haholo mme sesosa e ne e le monatja oo a neng a o tshetse dijong e le hore ke shwe.*

*Hoba nyatsi e utlwe hore monna wa ka o mpoelletse tsohle, o ile a nleta mosebetsing a lo nthohakela teng. O ne a re ha ke ya nyalwa ke "Masihlalisane" ebile ha ke ya ruteha. O ile a ntiha seriti pela basebetsi mmoho ba ka. Ke ha ke lo mo qosa bakeng sa ho ntiha seriti mosebetsing.*

*Monna wa ka e ne e se e se motho eo nka dulang le yena. O ne a ntshepisa ho mpolaya, a ntshupa ka dithunya, a ntelekisa ka dithipa. E ne e le ntho e bohloko le ho bana. Empa Modimo ha e sale o eme le nna ho fihlela nako ena eo ke hlotseng ka yona. Ke inka ke le mohlodi hobane ke fitile dinthong tse ngata tse boima haholoholo lefu. Empa ke mo hlotse hobane ke mona a qetelletse yena a tlo bua dintho tsohle tseo ba di entseng. Nyewe ya karohano e fedile jwale monna o se a hana ho tswa ka ntleng. O re mona ke ha hae, ho tla tswa nna hobane kgale ke ratana le mapolesa le ba buelli bao baka. Ke ile ka ya sepoleseng mme a fuwa lengolo la hore a se hlote a beha leoto la hae moo haka. Ke ikemiseditse ho qala bophelo bo botjha le bana baka ntle le yena.*

Originally our marriage had been a happy one. We were madly in love with each other. I was still at school when he married me. He asked me to leave school and promised me that he will educate me when we are married. He fulfilled his promises and took me back to school.

While I was at school, I became pregnant with my second child because he impregnated me with my first child while I was still at home. My in-laws influenced my husband not to allow me to continue with my studies because I enjoy making babies rather than studying. I accepted that, I left school and took care of my children. Everything was fine between my husband and I, but his parents influenced him with bad things. They were used to say he is afraid of his wife, he loves his wife, and he listens to everything his wife says. But I accepted that because I realized that he was on my side and that didn't change how he felt about me. That's why we lived together for eighteen years because I realized that all the things he did, he had been pressured, he didn't like them.

As years passed by, we were fighting, but it was common family fights. Sometimes I was aware that he was cheating on me but I was also aware that he still loves me. He had been a womanizer all along. He ended up where he no longer had a respect for me. I hope it was because of the bad influence he received from his parents and his sisters' friends. He ended up disrespecting me. I hope it was because of the bad influence he received from his parents and his sisters' friends. He ended up doing those bad things because he also believed that a woman needs not to be respected.



Things went on like that until he felt in love with a married woman in 1993. In 1994, that woman had my man's baby. What makes me sad about my husband now is that, it seems as if he didn't love me any more because he was now talking badly about me to that woman. He said to her that he didn't marry me I went there by myself. He forgot that I didn't force him to marry me. My parents were very strict. They didn't want us to fall in love. When we fall in love, we were punished. So, it happened that one day we got together with him, my parents looked for me and they didn't find me. When I arrived, they beat me and he decided to abduct me so that I shouldn't be beaten again. Because I also loved him, and I also had a problem of going back home when I had been with him, I agreed with him to abduct me. So, when he is with his secret lover, he talked about me saying that he didn't marry me I went there by myself, he also didn't pay the lobola because he never loved me, it's me who forced him to marry me. It's true that he didn't pay the remaining lobola because his parents were influencing him not to pay it because they claimed that he doesn't deserve to pay it because I'm uneducated, I don't have matric certificate, all those hurtful things.

My husband built that woman a house. When I asked him whether he still loves me when he now built other women houses, there were not good answers. We ended up fighting. He chased me with a knife, sometimes with a gun. He was used to call me with bad names when he arrived home from that woman. He was used to say, you bitch, you was a dog, and I made you a dignified person, I tried to educate you, but you denied. He told me those hurtful words. He was saying that my second child that I had when I was still at school wasn't his, I made him with another man. He abused me for a very long time. He was now a totally changed person. That woman was competing with me. He wanted my husband to do her everything that I had, and my husband fulfilled that. The life that I lived since 1993 had been the hurtful one, I even thought of divorcing, but I was wondering where would I go with the kids.

In March 2002, my husband confessed that he was using witchcraft. Him and that secret lover of him were using witchdoctors because they wanted to kill me, and to kill his secret lover's husband. They promised to marry each other. At the end his lover was now bewitching him. That's why he decided to confess. He said one day he came with a poison which he was given by his secret lover and poured it in the food. Thereafter I got very sick and the cause was that poison which he poured in the food so that I should die.

When his lover found out that my husband confessed, she went to my work and insulted me there. She was saying that I'm not legally married, I'm a "vat" en "sit" and I'm not educated. She damaged my face in front of my colleagues. I charged her for defamation of my character.

My husband was no longer a person that I can live with. He promised to kill me, he was pointing the guns at me, chasing me with a knife. It was something hurting to even children. But God had been standing by my side until this time which I won. I consider myself a winner because I went through many difficult things more especially death. But I won because he ended up confessing everything they did. The divorce case is over now, he refuses to quit the house. He says the house is his, I'm the one who must quit because I've been having affairs with the police and those lawyers of mine. I went to the police and he was given a court interdict. I intended to start a new life together with my children without him.



## 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

### 1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure

- 1.1.1 This narrative gives the experiences of a married woman who was abused by her husband. Her husband was also using witchcraft to get rid of her. Her experiences with her husband are organized in a series of eight events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.
- 1.1.2 In the first event the narrator gives a foreshadow of the events to come: her problems in marriage became worse but her marriage was good originally because they loved each other and she was promised that she will return to school. In the second event the narrator had an illegitimate child, and she had the second one while still at school. She had problems with in-laws, they wanted her to leave school, they tried to influence her husband against her. Their marriage lasted for 18 years. In the third event the narrator had problems with her husband, they had household fights, her husband cheats her with other women, he doesn't respect her, his parents and his sister's friend influence him against his wife. In the fourth event the narrator's husband had an affair with a married woman, he had a child with her, he talked badly about his wife with his mistress, he told his mistress that he didn't marry her (wife), she came to him, the narrator has flashback about the events which led to marriage which are punishment by parents, abduction, no lobola, she is uneducated, and when her husband say he never loved her. In the fifth event the narrator fights with her husband, her husband chased her with knife and gun, he called her with bad names, he denied parentage of second child, and he abused her for a long time. In the sixth event the narrator's husband and his mistress used witchcraft to kill narrator and husband of mistress, mistress bewitches her husband, narrator's husband poison his wife, at last he confessed. In the seventh event mistress abuses narrator at work, the narrator accuses her of defamation in court. In the eighth event the narrator divorced her husband, husband is given court interdict, and narrator began new life.

### THE FIRST EVENT

In the first event the narrator gives a foreshadow of the events to come: her marriage has deteriorated but it was good originally because they loved each other and she was promised that she will return to school.

#### Narrative of the first event

*Qalong lenyalo la rona le bile monate. Re ne re ratana haholo. Ke ne ke sa le sekolong ha a nnyala. O ile a nkopa hore ke tlohele sekolo a ntshepisa hore o tla nkenya sekolo ha re se re nyalane. O ile a fela a phethisa ditshepiso tsa hae a nkgutlisetsa sekolong.*

Originally our marriage had been a happy one. We were madly in love with each other. I was still at school when he married me. He asked me to leave school and promised me that he will educate me when we are married. He fulfilled his promises and took me back to school.



## THE SECOND EVENT

- (a) Her children: She had an illegitimate child, and she had the second one while still at school.
- (b) She had problems with in-laws: They say she should leave school, they tried to influence her husband against her.
- (c) But their marriage lasted for 18 years.

### Narrative of the second event

*Ha ke ntse ke le sekolong, ke ile ka ima ngwana wa ka wa bobedi hobane o ile a nkimisa wa pele ke sa le lapeng. Bomatsale ba ile ba susumetsa monna wa ka hore a se hlole a ntumella ho tswelapele ka dithuto tsa ka hobane ke thabela ho etsa bana ho ena le ho ithuta. Ke ile ka amohela seo, ka tlohela sekolo ka itlhokomella bana baka. Hwa nna hwa ba monate pakeng tsa ka le monna, empa batswadi ba hae bona ba ne ba mo susumetsa ka dintho tse mpe. Ba ne ba re o tshaba mosadi, o rata mosadi, ebile o mamela mosadi dinthong kaofela. Empa nna ke ne ke amohetse hobane ke ne ke bona yena a eme le nna mme a sa fetohe, ke ka lebaka lena ke phetseng le yena dilemo tse leshome le metso e robedi hobane ke ne ke bona hore dintho tseo a di etsang, o wa di susumelletswa, ha se hore yena o a di rata.*

While I was at school, I became pregnant with my second child because he impregnated me with my first child while I was still at home. My in-laws influenced my husband not to allow me to continue with my studies because I enjoy making babies rather than studying. I accepted that I left school and took care of my children. Everything was fine between my husband and I, but his parents influenced him with bad things. They were used to say he is afraid of his wife, he loves his wife, and he listens to everything his wife says. But I accepted that because I realized that he was on my side and that didn't change how he felt about me. That's why we lived together for eighteen years because I realized that all the things he did, he had been pressured, he didn't like them.

## THE THIRD EVENT

The narrator had problems with her husband:

- (a) They had household fights.
- (b) Her husband cheats her with other women.
- (c) He has no respect for his wife.
- (d) Her husband is under the influence of his parents and his sister's friends.

### Narrative of the third event

*Ha dilemo di ntse di feta, re ne re lwana, empa e ne e le ntwana e tlwaelehileng ya lelapa. Ke ne ke bona ka dinako tse ding hore o na le dikamano le basadi ba bang empa ke ntse ke bona hore o a nrata. Yena ha e sale e le motho ya ratang basadi, O ile a qetella moo*



*e leng hore ha a sa na tlhompho ho nna. Ke tshepa hore ebile tshusumetso eo ya batswadi ba hae le metswalle ya bo ausi wa hae. A qetella a se a inehetse mekgweng eo e mebe a bona hore mosadi ha se ntho e tshwanetseng hore e hlompjhwe.*

As years passed by, we were fighting, but it was common family fights. Sometimes I was aware that he was cheating on me but I was also aware that he still loves me. He had been a womanizer all along. He ended up where he no longer has a respect for me. I hope it was because of the bad influence he received from his parents and his sisters' friends. He ended up disrespecting me. I hope it was because of the bad influence he received from his parents and his sisters' friends. He ended up doing those bad things because he also believed that a woman needs not to be respected.

## THE FOURTH EVENT

The narrator's husband had an affair with a married woman:

- (a) He had a child with this woman.
- (b) He talked badly about wife with his mistress, he told his mistress that he didn't marry her, she came to him.
- (c) The narrator has flashback about events which led to marriage: punishment by parents, abduction, no lobola, uneducated, and that her husband never loved her.

### Narrative of the fourth event

*Dinitho di ile tsa tsamaya jwalo ho fihlela a ratana le mosadi wa motho ka 1993. Ka 1994, mosadi eno o ile a ba le ngwana le monna wa ka. Ntho e nkutlwisang bohloko ka monna wa ka ho na jwale ke hore mosading eo, ho bonahala hore o ne a se a sa mpatle hobane o ne a se a mpua hampe ho yena. A bolela ka moo a sa nnyalang ka teng ke itlisitseng. O a lebala hore ha ke ya mo qobella ho nnyala. Hae batswadi ba ka ba ne ba le bohale. Ba sa batle ha re ratana. Ha re ne re ratana, re ne re shapuwa. Ka hoo, ho ile hwa etsahala hore ka letsatsi le leng re tshokane le yena mme batswadi ba ka ba mpatla mme ba se mphumane. Eitse ha ke fihla, ba ile ba ntjhapa mme yena ke ha a etsa qeto ya ho nshobedisa hore ke se hlole ke shapthwa. Hobane le nna ke ne ke mo rata, ebile ke ba bothateng ba ho kgutlela hae ha ke tswa ho yena, ke ile ka dumela hore a nshobedise. Jwale ha a se a fihla ho nyatsi, ke ha a se a bua ka nna a re yena ha a nnyala ke nna ke itlisitseng le bohadi ha a bo ntsha, yena ha e sale a sa mpatle ke nna ke mo susumeditse hore a nnyale. Ke nnete bohadi ha a bontsha kaofela hobane batswadi ba hae ba ne ba mo susumetsa hore a se ntshe bohadi bo saletseng morao hobane ha ke ya ruteha, ha ke na lengolo la sehlopha sa leshome, ntho tse ngata tseo tse bohloko.*

Things went on like that until he fell in love with a married woman in 1993. In 1994, that woman had my man's baby. What makes me sad about my husband now is that, it seems as if he didn't love me any more because he was now talking badly about me to that woman. He said to her that he didn't marry me I went there by myself. He forgets that I didn't force him to marry me. My parents were very strict. They didn't want us to fall in love. When we fall in love, we were punished. So, it happened that one day we got together with him, my parents looked for me and they didn't find me. When I arrived, they beat me and he decides to abduct me so that I shouldn't be beaten again. Because I also



loved him, and I also had a problem of going back home when I had been with him, I agreed with him to abduct me. So, when he is with his secret lover, he talked about me saying that he didn't marry me I went there by myself, he also didn't pay the lobola because he never loved me, it's me who forced him to marry me. It's true that he didn't pay the remaining lobola because his parents were influencing him not to pay it because they claimed that he doesn't deserve to pay it because I'm uneducated, I don't have matric certificate, all those hurtful things.

## THE FIFTH EVENT

The narrator fights with her husband:

- (a) He fights her with a knife and gun.
- (b) He calls her with bad names.
- (c) He denied parentage of second child.
- (d) He abused her for a long time.

### Narrative of the fifth event

*Monna wa ka o ile a hahela mosadi eo ntlo. Ha ke mo botsa hore na o sa nthata na ha e le mona a se a hahela basadi ba bang matlo ho ne ho sa be le dikarabo tse ntle. Re ne re qetella re lwana. O ne a se a ntelekisa ka thipa, ka nako e nngwe ka sethunya. E ne e ye e re ha a fihla hae a tswa nyatsing eo ya hae, a mpitse ka mabitso a mabe a re "ja" sefebe, ke o phuthile o le ntja kao etsa motho, ka re ke o Kenya sekolo wa hana sekolo. O ne a mpuela mantswe ao a bohloko. O ne a re ngwana wa ka wa bobedi eo ke mo entseng ke le sekolong ha se wa hae, ke mo entse le monna e mong. O ntlhekefeditse ka nako e telele yena. O ne a se a fetohile ka hohlehohle. Mosadi eo o ne a etsa tlhodisano le nna. O ne a batla hore monna wa ka a mo etsetse ntho e nngwe le e nngwe eo ke neng ke ena le yona, mme monna wa ka o ne a phethisa. Bophelo boo ke bo phetseng ho tloha ka 1993 e bile bo bohloko hoo ke neng ke lakatsa ho hlala, empa ke ipotsa hore na ke tla be ke ya kae ka bana.*

My husband built that woman a house. When I asked him whether he still loves me when he now builds other women houses, there were not good answers. We ended up fighting. He chased me with a knife, sometimes with a gun. He was used to call me with bad names when he arrived home from that woman. He was used to say, you bitch, you was a dog, and I made you a dignified person, I tried to educate you, but you denied. He told me those hurtful words. He was saying that my second child that I had when I was still at school wasn't his, I made him with another man. He abused me for a very long time. He was now a totally changed person. That woman was competing with me. He wanted my husband to do her everything that I had, and my husband fulfilled that. The life that I lived since 1993 had been the hurtful one, I even thought of divorcing, but I was wondering where would I go with the kids.

## THE SIXTH EVENT

Plot of her husband and his mistress:



- (a) The narrator's husband and her husband's mistress use witchcraft to kill narrator and husband of his mistress.
- (b) Mistress bewitches her husband.
- (c) The husband gives his wife poison.
- (d) The narrator's husband confesses.

### Narrative of the sixth event

*Ka Hlakubele 2002, monna wa ka ke ha a mpoella hore o ne a loya. Yena le nyatsi eo ya hae ba ne ba tsamaya dingakeng tsa boloi ba batla ho mpolaya, ba batla le ho bolaya monna wa nyatsi ya hae. Ba ne ba tshepisane ho nyalana. Qetellong nyatsi eo ya hae e ne e se e loya yena. Ke ka hoo a etsang qeto ya ho mpoella. A re ka letsatsi le leng o kile a tla le monatja oo a neng a o fuwe ke nyatsi ya hae a o tshela ka dijong. Ka mora moo ke ile ka kula haholo mme sesosa e ne e le monatja oo a neng a o tshetse dijong e le hore ke shwe.*

In March 2002, my husband confessed that he was using witchcraft. Him and that secret lover of his were using witchdoctors because they wanted to kill me, and to kill his secret lover's husband. They promised to marry each other. At the end his lover was now bewitching him. That's why he decided to confess. He said one day he came with a poison which he was given by his secret lover and poured it in the food. Thereafter I got very sick and the cause was that poison which he poured in the food so that I should die.

### THE SEVENTH EVENT

- (a) Mistress abuses narrator at work.
- (b) Narrator accuses her of defamation in court.

### Narrative of the seventh event

*Hoba nyatsi e utlwe hore monna wa ka o mpoelletse tsohle, o ile a nlata mosebetsing a lo nthohakela teng. O ne a re ha ke ya nyalwa ke "Masihlalisane" ebile ha ke ya ruteha. O ile a ntiha seriti pela basebetsi mmoho ba ka. Ke ha ke lo mo qosa bakeng sa ho ntiha seriti mosebetsing.*

When his lover found out that my husband confessed, she went to my work and insulted me there. She was saying that I'm not legally married, I'm a "vat" en "sit" and I'm not educated. She damaged my face in front of my colleagues. I charged her for defamation of my character.

### THE EIGHTH EVENT

- (a) The narrator divorced her husband.
- (b) Her husband is given court interdict.
- (c) The narrator began a new life.



## Narrative of the eighth event

*Monna wa ka e ne e se e se motho eo nka dulang le yena. O ne a ntshepisa ho mpolaya, a ntshupa ka dithunya, a ntelekisa ka dithipa. E ne e le ntho e bohloko le ho bana. Empa Modimo ha e sale o eme le nna ho fihlela nako ena eo ke hlotseng ka yona. Ke inka ke le mohlodi hobane ke fitile dinthong tse ngata tse boima haholoholo lefu. Empa ke mo hlotse hobane ke mona a qetelletse yena a tlo bua dintho tsohle tseo ba di entseng. Nyewe ya karohano e fedile jwale monna o se a hana ho tswa ka ntlong. O re mona ke ha hae, ho tla tswa nna hobane kgale ke ratana le mapolesa le ba buelli bao baka. Ke ile ka ya sepoleseng mme a fuwa lengolo la hore a se hlote a beha leoto la hae moo haka. Ke ikemiseditse ho qala bophelo bo botjha le bana baka ntle le yena.*

My husband was no longer a person that I can live with. He promised to kill me, he was pointing the guns at me, chasing me with a knife. It was something hurting to even children. But God had been standing by my side until this time which I won. I consider myself a winner because I went through many difficult things more especially death. But I won because he ended up confessing everything they did. The divorce case is over now, he refuses to quit the house. He says the house is his, I'm the one who must quit because I've been having affairs with the police and those lawyers of mine. I went to the police and he was given a court interdict. I intended to start a new life together with my children without him.

### 1.2 Endpoint: Theme of the narrative

The theme of this narrative is woman abuse. This man abuses his wife emotionally by cheating on her, by having a child with someone else, by talking sarcastically about his wife when he is with his lover, by building his lover a house, by calling his wife with bad names. And physically by bewitching her, and chasing her with knives and guns.

### 1.3 Ordering of events

#### 1.3.1 Sequence

The events in this narrative are ordered in a linear sequence. One event leads to the next. Firstly, the narrator gives a foreshadow of the events to come: her marriage deteriorated but originally the couple had a good life because they loved each other and she was promised that she will return to school. Their marriage has the ups and downs like any other marriages. Secondly, their relationship becomes unpleasant when the narrator's husband has a child with a married woman, and it becomes more unpleasant when he builds her a house. Thirdly, the man confesses to his wife, and his lover isn't happy about that, she goes to narrator's work and embarrasses her in front of her co-workers. The narrator has flashback about the events which led to marriage which are punishment by her parents, her abduction, no lobola: (i) she is uneducated; (ii) and when her husband say he never loved her. The narrator can't take it any longer, she ends the marriage.

#### 1.3.2 Duration

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about eighteen years.



## 1.4 Stability of identity

The character of the narrator displays two sides:

Firstly, she appears as a timid character that is easily influenced and manipulated. This can be seen in the following:

*Her children: She had the first child while she was unmarried, and the second one while she was still at school.*

Abused by her parents: She was punished, abducted. She had problems with her in-laws.

Problems with her husband: She gave excuses for him. Her husband's affair accepted by her.

Secondly she became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation. She divorced her husband and he was granted a court interdict.

## 1.5 Causal linkage

The events in this narrative are causally linked. They show the relationship of cause and effect.

Firstly, the couple originally has a happy marriage. The wife becomes pregnant with her second child while she is at school. Her in-laws are against the fact that she should continue with her studies. Secondly, the man has a child with a married woman. This annoys his wife very much because he now talks badly about her to his lover. Thirdly, the man builds his lover a house, as a result, his wife's life becomes a living hell. Fourthly, the man confesses to his wife, as a result, his lover goes to her lover's wife and deforms his character. Fifthly, the man promises to kill his wife, as a result, she ends the marriage.

## 1.6 Demarcation signs

There are no demarcation signs in this narrative.

# 2. NARRATIVE FORM

This story has a regressive and progressive form.

## 2.1 Regressive narrative

It's regressive because the narrator becomes pregnant and she leaves school to look after her kids. Her husband cheats on her and he has a child with another man's wife. Her husband builds his lover a house. Her husband calls her with bad names, e.g. bitch and dog. Her husband bewitches her. She eventually ends the marriage.



## **2.2 Progressive narrative**

It's progressive in the sense that she became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation of her character. She divorced her husband and he was granted a court interdict.

## **3. SELF-NARRATIVE**

### **3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time**

The eight events in paragraph 1.1.2 are related or connected to each other in the sense that in the first event, the narrator's marriage has deteriorated, this is connected with the problems she encountered with her in-laws that she should leave school, and by influencing her husband against her. The narrator's husband had an extra-marital affair with a married woman because things were not going well in his home, they had household fights. The narrator's husband poisoned his wife because he no longer loved her, that's why he called her with bad names, chased her with knife and gun, and denied parentage of his second child. The narrator's husband's confession is connected with her husband's mistress's decision to go to abuse her at work. Her husband's mistress's abuse and her husband's abuse forced the narrator to end the marriage.

### **3.2 Social accounting**

The narrator concentrates on self-identification: She identified herself as a lover, a mother, an abused person, she is vilified by her in-laws, parents, husband and her husband's mistress, she is bewitched, poisoned but then she appeared as a strong person.

### **3.3 Narrative is true**

This narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if the parents are very strict and too protective, their children might make decisions that they might regret afterwards just to avoid their parents' punishment. Like in this marriage, this woman agreed to be abducted just to avoid being punished.

Women abuse is most common in our community. It's even worse if the women aren't working and depend on their husbands for financial support. Their husbands abuse them because they know exactly that they can't lay charges against them because if their husbands get arrested they know that they'll suffer financially. So, most of them accept to be abused rather than to lay charges against their partners. If the men are the ones who are abused by their wives, they just keep quiet because they're afraid that they will be seen as weak. The better way to deal with such abuse is to report the abusers so that the correct steps should be taken against them. The account is of help to the community because people who have been abused would know what to do with their abusers.



#### **4. PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATION: PROCESS**

##### **4.1 Variety of narrative form**

This narrative has one narrative form. This narrative form is also known as the comedy-romance narrative (Gergen: p. 197, fig 8.2). Such narratives have a regressive beginning which ends in a progressive change.

##### **4.2 Micro narrative**

This narrative it's a micro narrative because it doesn't show everything of the consequences that happened. It shows that the narrative only covers the events around cheating and witchcraft.

##### **4.3 Nesting of narrative**

Nesting is not applicable because there is only one narrative.

#### **5. PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

##### **5.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that she fails to continue with her studies, her husband has a child with another woman, and he also builds her a house, and her (narrator) life become difficult. So, the people pity her.

##### **5.2 Progressive narrative**

The narrator became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation of her character, she divorced her husband and her husband was granted a court interdict.

#### **6. INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

##### **6.1 Moral evaluation**

The narrator will be evaluated as an honest person within her community. She portrays herself as a person who always justifies her action, e.g. when she left school to look after her kids just because she didn't want to bother her in-laws with her responsibility.

She will also be evaluated as a forgiving person because she forgave her husband after all the hurtful things he did to her, but her husband's abuse didn't stop, that's why she ended the marriage.



## 6.2 Interminable negotiation

The identity of the narrator as a person who doesn't run away from her responsibility can be sustained in her community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because of his responsibility.

## 6.3 Reciprocal identities

The narrator's in-laws influence their son against his wife with the hope that he will leave her. And the narrator's husband's mistress damages her (narrator's) image with the hope of winning her husband.

## 7. EMOTIONS

- (a) The narrator experiences the emotion of anger and resentment after she found out that her husband has a child with another married woman and he also built her a house.
- (b) Yes, such emotions are embedded within the culture. It's normal for a person who is ill-treated like this to be angry.
- (c) The emotional expression are meaningful because every woman who just find out that her husband isn't honest as she thinks becomes angry.
- (d) The narrator becomes hostile. In her culture, hostility is acceptable. It's normal to be angry and hostile having been subjected to ill-treatment of this nature.



## FIFTH ANALYSIS

### ABUSE

*Ke ile ka nyalwa mme ka ya ntlong ya ka e ntjha Unit one Thaba Nchu. Letsatsi la pele feela ke kene ntlong e ntjha, bosiung bona boo, ke ile ka hla ka robala ke le mong bosiu boo kaofela. Ke ne ke sa tsebe kapa ho na le baahisane kapa ha bayo hobane ke fihlile moo e se e le shwalane. Ke ne ke tshaba le ho tshaba empa monna eo, ha a ka a tla bosiu boo bo le bokalo. Seteng ke ne ke utlwa !! ya banana. Ha ke hlodisa ka fesetere ka fumana hore ke yena o ntse a ba tlodisa diterata ho uwa matlong a thitelo. Letsatsi le hlahlamang hoseng, a kena le motswalle wa hae le banana ba babedi. Ha ke ya ka ka botsa letho, ke ne ke maketse hore na e be ho etsahalang. Hwa ya jwalo ya ba hahona monate lenyalong leo ho fihlela ke ima ngwana wa bobedi.*

*Ha ke ntse ke le moimana wa ngwana wa bobedi, ho ile hwa fihla ausi e mong hara mpa ya bosiu a tsamaya le monna wa ka ba tswa majwaleng ba tla ba lwana. Ausi eno a mpoellela hore monna wa ka o mo imisitse. Ka mmotsa hore na o a hlokomela hore le nna ke moimana. A dumela. Ngwana wa ka o ile a hlaha ka Hlakola, wa hae ka Hlakubele. Ausi eno ha ngwana a se a hlahile o ne a ntse a tla haka mona ha monna wa ka a ka qeta nako a sa ye ho yena a tlo batla lebeso la ngwana, ho fihlela ke ngala ke ya heso. Ke ile ka dula heso dikgwedi tse ka bang tharo. A tsamaya a ya diagenteng ka bitswa, ra kopanngwa hape.*

*Ausi eno a phetha a tla hape ka ngwana enwa wa hae, a tlo batla lebeso la ngwana ho fihlela le nna ke be ke teneha ke mo lwantsha. Ya ba ba a qabana le monna wa ka hobane le yena o ne a le teng ha re ntse re lwana a shebeletse, mme a bolela hore ha a bitsa kgarebe eo kgetlong lena. Monna wa ka o ne a ithatela thethana. Ha o re o sa utlwile ke eo, o sa ratana le e mong. O ile a ba tjhentjha jwalo ho fihlela ke be ke ema feela ke shebella.*

*O ne a nwa haholo. O ile a nwa jwalo ho fihlela a se a sa ye mosebetsing a se a itulela basading bano ba hae ho fihlela mosebetsi o feela. Ha a ka a mpoellela ha mosebetsi o se o fedile. Lenna ke ne ke sa hlokomela seo hobane ha motho a dula a sa ofe tjhelete ka mehla, a dula a tauwe, o ke ke wa tseba ha a se a sa sebetse hobane o dula ka mehla a se na tjhelete. Nna ke ne ke ikela mosebetsing ke sa bone phapang. Nna ke ne ke ya mosebetsing e sa le hoseng ke mo siya a ntse a robetse. Ha ke fihla ha a yo o tla tla masiu ao a hae. Ke be ke mmotsa hore na ha a sa theohela ha e le mafelo a beke. A dumela. Ka botsa lebaka, a se mpoellela. Ka letsetsa mosebetsing, ke teng moo ba ileng ba mpoellela hore ha a sa sebetse.*

*Ka qala ka kula ke kगतello ya madi, pelo, le kगतello ya maikutlo. Ke ne ke kula hoo ke neng ke sa kgone le ho tsoha fatshe. Ke ne ke jarane le mathata ke le mong. Empa ka mohau wa Modimo ke ile ka fola hape.*

*Yena o ne a sa sebetse empa a dula a tauwe mehlaena. Ke ditlhapa feela ha a fihla bosiu. Ke ne ke lokela ho robala ka di "track suit" hobane ha a fihla o ne a re lwantsha le bana a re shapa, e be re sa tla matha bosiu bo le bokana le bana. Ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho tsamaya ke mo siya moo. Ke ile ka lo itulela mokhukhung. Ke dutse moo ho fihlela le*



*yena moo ma a leng teng a kula hobane o ne a se a bolawa ke tlala hobane jwale o ne a se a sa sebetse. O ile a robatswa sepetlele.*

*Ha a se a lokollotswe, o ile a kopa hore bana ba iswe a lo ba bona. Ke ile ka ba isa mme ka mo siya le e moholo. Ka mora matsatsinyana a fihla ha ka mona a re ngwana o re o a mpatla. Jwale o tla letsatsi le se le lo dikela hore a tle a tsebe ho kopa boroko. Jwale o a tseba hore bomme re jwang, ka mo tshwarela a robaletsa, a tsamaye tsatsi le latelang a boele kgutle hape ho fihlela a se a dula le nna hape ka ho otlolloha ha ka mona mokhukung Botshabelo. Ke ile ka mmatlala mosebetsi wa bosuwe hobane o ne a ntse a na le lengolo la bosuwe empa o ile a ikgethela ho ba lepolesa. Jwale o ne a tlameha ho nka mosebetsi wa bosuwe hobane o lahlehetswe ke wa bopolesa. O ile a fumana mosebetsi oo wa bosuwe.*

*Ka mora nakonyana, a qalella hape ka botawa le basadi. A etsa ditokfele baahisaneng ba ka mona. Ha kgwedi e fedile bontate ba bang ba isa tjhelete le dikorosara malapeng, yena o tla tla ka dipolasitiki tsa dinama a fihle a apare diaparo tse hlwekileng a fetele baahisaneng ka nama eo ho etswe stokfele moo. O tla tla hae mohlang tjhelete e fedileng. Ha a fihla ka tlung ka mona a batla dijo ka ntwana. O ile a tswella jwalo ho fihlela a nyamela hape dibeke tse ka bang pedi ho isa kgwedding. Mohlang a tlang, ha a ka fumana ke le siyo, o ne a roba mokhukhu a nke diaparo a di rekisi. Ka mo isa basebeletsing ba setjhaba mme ba mo eletsa hore a kgutlele ha hae Thaba Nchu. Ha a ka a kgutlele ha hae empa tlhekefetso ha e ya ka ya fela.*

*Ke ile ka lo kopa lengolo la hore a se hlole a tla ha ka mona. Ka morao ho moo, ke ile ka etsa kopo ya tlhalo, mme ra hlalana. Re bile mmoho dilemo tse ka bang leshome le motso o mong. Ka mora dilemonyana di se kae, ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho reka ntlo ya kadimo mme ke ntse ke itulela teng le bana ba ka ba babedi. E moholo ke mooki, wa bobedi o etsa sehlopha sa leshome.*

I got married and I went to my new house at Unit one in Thaba Nchu. The first day that we moved in in the new house, that night, I slept alone for the whole night. I didn't know whether there were neighbours or not because I arrived there while it was a darker stage of twilight. I was even afraid but that man never showed up that night. What I only heard was it of girls. When I peep through the window I found that it's him, he was helping them to jump over the fence, they were going to the shebeens. The following day he arrived with his friend and two girls. I didn't ask anything, I was just wondering what is going on. Things went on like that and there was no happiness in that marriage until I become pregnant with my second child.

While I was pregnant, a certain lady arrived in the middle of the night together with my husband coming from the shebeen, they were fighting. That lady told me that my husband impregnated her. I asked her whether she realizes that I'm also pregnant. She agreed. My child was born on February, and hers on March. After the birth of that lady's child, that lady was used to come to my place if my husband took some time without visiting her, she came to ask for her baby's milk, until I deserted him and went to my family. I stayed at home for about three months. He went to the lawyers and I was called and we were reunited.

That lady came again with that baby of hers to ask for his milk until I lost my patience and fought her. They then broke up with my husband because he was there watching us when



fighting, he said he didn't call her this time. My husband was a womanizer. He was involved with many different women. If you heard about this one today, tomorrow is in love with another one. He changed them like that until I gave up.

He was a heavy drinker. He drunk like that until he stopped going to work, he was spending time with those women of his until he lost his job. He never told me that he lost his job. I wasn't aware of that because if a person isn't giving you money, and he is always drunk, you can't know if he is no longer working because he always doesn't have money. I used to go to work without noticing any difference. I used to go to work early in the morning leaving him still in bed. When I arrived he wasn't there he will come at night. I asked him whether he was no longer working during the weekends. He agreed. I asked him why? He didn't tell me. I phoned at his work, they told me that he was no longer working.

I started to become ill suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, and emotional stress. I was so sick to such an extent that I couldn't even stand up. I was suffering alone without his support. But through God's mercy I became OK again.

He was not working but he was always drunk. He was insulting me when he arrived drunk at night. I was supposed to sleep wearing tracksuit because when he arrived he fought us including kids, we run the whole night. I decided to move out and left him there. I went to stay in a shack house. I stayed there until he became sick because he was suffering from hunger because he was no longer working. He was admitted in a hospital.

After he was discharged, he requested to see the kids. I send them and I left him with the eldest one. After few days he arrived at my place saying that the child said she needs me. He came at sun set so that he must ask to sleep over. So, you know how we women are, I forgave him and he slept over, he went away the following day and he came back again until he lived full time with me at my shack here at Botshabelo. I found him a teaching post because he had a teacher's certificate but he chose to be a policeman. So he was forced to take teaching because he lost that one of being a policeman. He got that job.

After a while he started again with liquor and women. He was doing the stockvels at my neighbour's houses. When it was month end and other men gave their families money and groceries, he will come carrying plastics of meat, he will change and wear clean clothes then took that meat to the neighbours and they'll do stockvel there. He will come home when all his money is finished. When he arrived at home he fought for food. He continued like that until he disappeared again for about two to four weeks. When he returned and didn't find me at home, he was used to break the shack's door and took my clothes and sell them. I reported that incident to the social workers and they adviced him to go back to Thaba Nchu, where he lived. He didn't go to his house but his abuse didn't stop.

I went to court to ask for a court interdict. Thereafter I claimed for a divorce, and we divorced. We had been together for about eleven years. After some few years, I decided to buy a loan house and I'm still staying there together with my two children. The eldest one is a nurse and the second one is doing grade 12.



## 1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNTS

### 1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure

- 1.1.1 This narrative relates the experiences of a newly married woman whose husband's flame of love has gone out the first night of their marriage. Her experiences with her husband and her life with her two kids are organized in a series of nine events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.

### THE FIRST EVENT

The woman slept alone for the whole night the first night of their marriage. She didn't feel the warmth of love in her relationship until she became pregnant with her second child.

#### Narrative of the first event

*Ke ile ka nyalwa mme ka ya ntlong ya ka e ntjha Unit one Thaba Nchu. Letsatsi la pele feela ke kene ntlong e ntjha, bosiung bona boo, ke ile ka hla ka robala ke le mong bosiu boo kaofela. Ke ne ke sa tsebe kapa ho na le baahisane kapa ha bayo hobane ke fihlile moo e se e le shwalane. Ke ne ke tshaba le ho tshaba empa monna eo, ha a ka a tla bosiu boo bo le bokalo. Seteng ke ne ke utlwa il' ya banana. Ha ke hlodisa ka fesetere ka fumana hore ke yena o ntse a ba tlodisa diterata ho uwa matlong a thitelo. Letsatsi le hlahlamang hoseng, a kena le motswalle wa hae le banana ba babedi. Ha ke ya ka ka botsa letho, ke ne ke maketse hore na e be ho etsahalang. Hwa ya jwalo ya ba hahona monate lenyalong leo ho fihlela ke ima ngwana wa bobedi.*

I got married and I went to my new house at Unit one in Thaba Nchu. The first day that we moved in in the new house, that night, I slept alone for the whole night. I didn't know whether there were neighbours or not because I arrived there while it was a darker stage of twilight. I was even afraid but that man never showed up that night. What I only heard was il' of girls. When I peep through the window I found that it's him, he was helping them to jump over the fence, they were going to the shebeens. The following day he arrived with his friend and two girls. I didn't ask anything, I was just wondering what is going on. Things went on like that and there was no happiness in that marriage until I become pregnant with my second child.

### THE SECOND EVENT

A certain woman arrived at the narrator's house claiming that the narrator's husband impregnated her. Her visit continues even after her child's birth. The narrator moved out.

#### Narrative of the second event

*Ha ke ntse ke le moimana wa ngwana wa bobedi, ho ile hwa fihla ausi e mong hara mpa ya bosiu a tsamaya le monna wa ka ba tswa majwaleng ba tla ba lwana. Ausi eno a mpoella hore monna wa ka o mo imisitse. Ka mmotsa hore na o a hlokomela hore le nna ke moimana. A dumela. Ngwana wa ka o ile a hlaha ka Hlakola, wa hae ka Hlakubele. Ausi eno ha ngwana a se a hlahile o ne a ntse a tla haka mona ha monna wa ka a ka qeta nako a sa ye ho yena a tlo batla lebese la ngwana, ho fihlela ke ngala ke ya heso. Ke ile*



*ka dula heso dikgwedi tse ka bang tharo. A tsamaya a ya diagenteng ka bitswa, ra kopanngwa hape.*

While I was pregnant, a certain lady arrived in the middle of the night together with my husband coming from the shebeen, they were fighting. That lady told me that my husband impregnated her. I asked her whether she realizes that I'm also pregnant. She agreed. My child was born on February, and hers on March. After the birth of that lady's child, that lady was used to come to my place if my husband took some time without visiting her, she came to ask for her baby's milk, until I deserted him and went to my family. I stayed at home for about three months. He went to the lawyers and I was called and we were reunited.

### THE THIRD EVENT

The woman's visit didn't stop. The narrator lost her patience. Her husband moves from one woman to the next.

#### Narrative of the third event

*Ausi eno a phetha a tla hape ka ngwana enwa wa hae, a tlo batla lebese la ngwana ho fihlela le nna ke be ke teneha ke mo lwantsha. Ya ba ba a qabana le monna wa ka hobane le yena o ne a le teng ha re ntse re lwana a shebeletse, mme a bolela hore ha a bitsa kgarebe eo kgetlong lena. Monna wa ka o ne a ithatela thethana. Ha o re o sa utlwile ke eo, o sa ratana le e mong. O ile a ba tjhentjha jwalo ho fihlela ke be ke ema feela ke shebella.*

That lady came again with that baby of hers to ask for his milk until I lost my patience and fought her. They then broke up with my husband because he was there watching us when fighting, he said he didn't call her this time. My husband was a womanizer. He was involved with many different women. If you heard about this one today, tomorrow is in love with another one. He changed them like that until I gave up.

### THE FOURTH EVENT

The man drinks heavily and he loses his job. His wife isn't aware that he is no longer working.

#### Narrative of the fourth event

*O ne a nwa haholo. O ile a nwa jwalo ho fihlela a se a sa ye mosebetsing a se a itulela basading bano ba hae ho fihlela mosebetsi o feela. Ha a ka a mpoella ha mosebetsi o se o fedile. Lenna ke ne ke sa hlokomele seo hobane ha motho a dula a sa ofe tjhelete ka mehla, a dula a tauwe, o ke ke wa tseba ha a se a sa sebetse hobane o dula ka mehla a se na tjhelete. Nna ke ne ke ikela mosebetsing ke sa bone phapang. Nna ke ne ke ya mosebetsing e sa le hoseng ke mo siya a ntse a robetse. Ha ke fihla ha a yo o tla tla masiu ao a hae. Ke be ke mmotsa hore na ha a sa theohela ha e le mafelo a beke. A dumela. Ka botsa lebaka, a se mpoelle. Ka letsetsa mosebetsing, ke teng moo ba ileng ba mpoella hore ha a sa sebetse.*



He was a heavy drinker. He drunk like that until he stopped going to work, he was spending time with those women of his until he lost his job. He never told me that he lost his job. I wasn't aware of that because if a person isn't giving you money, and he is always drunk, you can't know if he is no longer working because he always doesn't have money. I used to go to work without noticing any difference. I used to go to work early in the morning leaving him still in bed. When I arrived he wasn't there he will come at night. I asked him whether he was no longer working during the weekends. He agreed. I asked him why? He didn't tell me. I phoned at his work, they told me that he was no longer working.

## THE FIFTH EVENT

The woman becomes ill and her husband doesn't support her.

### Narrative of the fifth event

*Ka qala ka kula ke kgatello ya madi, pelo, le kgatello ya maikutlo. Ke ne ke kula hoo ke neng ke sa kgone le ho tsoha fatshe. Ke ne ke jarane le mathata ke le mong. Empa ka mohau wa Modimo ke ile ka fola hape.*

I started to become ill suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, and emotional stress. I was so sick to such an extent that I couldn't even stand up. I was suffering alone without his support. But through God's mercy I became OK again.

## THE SIXTH EVENT

The man beats his wife together with the kids when he arrives from the shebeen. His wife moved out. He became sick and he was admitted in a hospital.

### Narrative of the sixth event

*Yena o ne a sa sebetse empa a dula a tauwe mehlaena. Ke ditlhapa feela ha a fihla bosiu. Ke ne ke lokela ho robala ka di "track suit" hobane ha a fihla o ne a re lwantsha le bana a re shapa, e be re sa tla matha bosiu bo le bokana le bana. Ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho tsamaya ke mo siya moo. Ke ile ka lo itulela mokhukhung. Ke dutse moo ho fihlela le yena moo ma a leng teng a kula hobane o ne a se a bolawa ke tlala hobane jwale o ne a se a sa sebetse. O ile a robatswa sepetlele.*

He was not working but he was always drunk. He was insulting me when he arrived drunk at night. I was supposed to sleep wearing tracksuit because when he arrived he fought us including kids, we run the whole night. I decided to move out and left him there. I went to stay in a shack house. I stayed there until he became sick because he was suffering from hunger because he was no longer working. He was admitted in a hospital.



## THE SEVENTH EVENT

After his discharge, he asks to see the kids and he also make peace with his wife.

### Narrative of seventh event

*Ha a se a lokollotswe, o ile a kopa hore bana ba iswe a lo ba bona. Ke ile ka ba isa mme ka mo siya le e moholo. Ka mora matsatsinyana a fihla ha ka mona a re ngwana o re o a mpatla. Jwale o tla letsatsi le se le lo dikela hore a tle a tsebe ho kopa boroko. Jwale o a tseba hore bomme re jwang, ka mo tshwarela a robaletsa, a tsamaye tsatsi le latelang a boele kgutle hape ho fihlela a se a dula le nna hape ka ho otlolloha ha ka mona mokhukung Botshabelo. Ke ile ka mmatlela mosebetsi wa bosuwe hobane o ne a ntse a na le lengolo la bosuwe empa o ile a ikgethela ho ba lepolesa. Jwale o ne a tlameha ho nka mosebetsi wa bosuwe hobane o lahlehetswe ke wa bopolesa. O ile a fumana mosebetsi oo wa bosuwe.*

After he was discharged, he requested to see the kids. I send them and I left him with the eldest one. After few days he arrived at my place saying that the child said she needs me. He came at sun set so that he must ask to sleep over. So, you know how we women are, I forgave him and he slept over, he went away the following day and he came back again until he lived full time with me at my shack here at Botshabelo. I found him a teaching post because he had a teacher's certificate but he chose to be a policeman. So he was forced to take teaching because he lost that one of being a policeman. He got that job.

## THE EIGHTH EVENT

The man's drinking behavior and his love of women started again. He does the stokvels and he doesn't give his wife any money. If he doesn't find anybody home he breaks in.

### Narrative of the eighth event

*Ka mora nakonyana, a qalella hape ka botawa le basadi. A etsa ditokfele baahisaneng ba ka mona. Ha kgwedi e fedile bontate ba bang ba isa tjhelete le dikorosara malapeng, yena o tla tla ka dipolasitiki tsa dinama a fihle a apare diaparo tse hlwekileng a fetele baahisaneng ka nama eo ho etswe stokfele moo. O tla tla hae mohlang tjhelete e fedileng. Ha a fihla ka tlang ka mona a batla dijo ka ntwala. O ile a tswella jwalo ho fihlela a nyamela hape dibeke tse ka bang pedi ho isa kgwedding. Mohlang a tlang, ha a ka fumana ke le siyo, o ne a roba mokhukhu a nke diaparo a di rekisi. Ka mo isa basebeletsing ba setjhaba mme ba mo eletsa hore a kgutlele ha hae Thaba Nchu. Ha a ka a kgutlele ha hae empa tlhekefetso ha e ya ka ya fela.*

After a while he started again with liquor and women. He was doing the stokvels at my neighbour's houses. When it was month end and other men gave their families money and groceries, he will come carrying plastics of meat, he will change and wear clean clothes then took that meat to the neighbours and they'll do stokvel there. He will come home when all his money is finished. When he arrives at home he fights for food. He continued like that until he disappeared again for about two to four weeks. When he returned and didn't find me at home, he was used to break the shack's door and took my clothes and sell them. I reported that incident to the social workers and they advised him to go back to Thaba Nchu, where he lives. He didn't go to his house but his abuse didn't stop.



## THE NINTH EVENT

The woman divorces her husband. She bought a loan house and life goes just fine between her and her children.

### Narrative of the ninth event

*Ke ile ka lo kopa lengolo la hore a se hlole a tla ha ka mona. Ka morao ho moo, ke ile ka etsa kopo ya tlhalo, mme ra hlalana. Re bile mmoho dilemo tse ka bang leshome le motso o mong. Ka mora dilemonyana di se kae, ke ile ka etsa qeto ya ho reka ntlo ya kadimo mme ke ntse ke itulela teng le bana ba ka ba babedi. E moholo ke mooki, wa bobedi o etsa sehlopha sa leshome.*

I went to court to ask for a court interdict. Thereafter I claimed for a divorce, and we divorced. We have been together for about eleven years. After some few years, I decided to buy a loan house and I'm still staying there together with my two children. The eldest one is a nurse and the second one is doing grade 12.

### 1.2 Endpoint: Theme of the narrative

The central theme is abuse and the ways in which the narrator experienced this abuse are the following:

- (a) The problems of the first night of her marriage: The narrator's first night of her marriage wasn't the happy one because her husband left her alone for that whole night. He was enjoying himself with beer with other girls in a shebeen.
- (b) The presence of her husband's mistress in her home: Her husband's mistress came to her home and told her that her husband impregnated her.
- (c) Her husband abused her verbally and physically, through his drinking and womanizing: He no longer contributed to the finances of the family, he had other interests like stokvel, he had problems with his wife's shack and he was also used to sell his wife's clothes.

### 1.3 Ordering of events

#### 1.3.1 Sequence

The events in this narrative are ordered in linear sequence. They follow one another in this manner: One event leads to the other. Firstly, the woman spends the first night in their new house alone, as a result their relationship becomes unpleasant. Secondly, the narrator's husband had a child with someone else and she comes any time to him to ask for her baby's milk. The narrator doesn't like this and she deserts him. They talked and she returned. The woman came again to ask for her baby's milk, the narrator beats her and she (narrator) went to stay in a shack house at Botshabelo. Thirdly, the man apologized and he stayed with his wife in a shack. He started again with his abuse, his wife divorces him.

#### 1.3.2 Duration

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about eleven years.



### 1.4 Stability of identity

The narrator has a vacillating identity i.e., she continually changes her feelings towards her husband and she is at times uncertain of what action to take. She vacillates between two extremes: a timid and a strong person.

As a timid character:

- (a) She is afraid and has no confidence in herself at the beginning of the marriage.
- (b) She initially accepted the pregnant mistress.
- (c) She accepted the abuse of her husband as well as his womanizing and drinking: she lacks the courage to confront him.
- (d) She became ill because of this abuse.

As a strong character:

- (a) She went back to her family after the problems with the mistress.
- (b) She fought with the mistress.
- (c) She phoned her husband's work to find out if he is still employed.
- (d) She left her husband and went to stay in a shack.
- (e) She reported her husband's abuse.
- (f) She got an interdict against him and eventually divorced him.

### 1.5 Causal linkage

The events in the narrative are causally linked. They show the relationship of cause and effect.

Firstly, the man had a child with another woman, the woman demands milk from the narrator's husband. That annoys the narrator and she moved out for three months to stay with her family. Secondly, the couple sorts their differences out and the narrator comes back home. That woman comes again to demand the baby's milk, as a result the narrator lost her patience and fights her. Thirdly, narrator's husband drinks heavily and as a result he lost his job, that affected his wife so much and she became very ill. Fourthly, the man's abuse didn't stop, his wife deserts him again. Fifthly, the man becomes ill and he got admitted in a hospital. Sixthly, he was discharged and he apologized but the abuse didn't stop. His wife ends the marriage.

### 1.6 Demarcation signs

There are no demarcation signs in this narrative.

## 2. NARRATIVE FORMS

This narrative has a regressive and progressive form.



## **2.1 Regressive narrative**

It's regressive because the narrator sleeps alone the first night in their new house. Her husband spends that night with women at the shebeens. Her husband impregnates another woman. This woman annoys her when she demands milk from her husband and she deserts her husband. Narrator and her husband work things out and she comes back home. The woman comes again to demand her baby's milk, the narrator fights her. The narrator's husband is a womanizer and a heavy drinker. He loses his job as a result, his wife becomes sick. He doesn't support her. He insults and beats her together with the kids. The narrator deserts him again. The man is now living alone and he drinks heavily, he becomes sick and he is admitted in a hospital. He apologizes but the abuse didn't stop. His wife divorces him.

## **2.2 Progressive narrative**

It's progressive in the sense that the woman divorces her abusive husband. She buys a loan house, she is no longer living in a shack. Her two children are doing just fine. The eldest one is a nurse and the second one is doing grade 12.

# **3. SELF-NARRATIVE**

## **3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time**

In this narrative, the events are related in such a way that each event leads to the next. Firstly, the man had a child with another woman, this incident is connected to that woman's decision to demand her baby's milk from the narrator's man. Secondly, the narrator moved out because she also has a baby who needs that milk. Thirdly, the narrator and her husband sort things out and the narrator comes home again. The woman comes again to ask for her baby's milk. The narrator loses her patience and she fights her. Fourthly, the man drinks heavily and he loses his job, when his wife hears this she becomes sick. Fifthly, the man is always drunk and he insults and beats his wife together with the kids. His wife deserts him. He becomes ill and thereafter he apologizes and he moves into his wife's shack. The abuse didn't stop, his wife ends the marriage.

## **3.2 Social accounting**

The social purpose which this story fulfills is that of self-identification. The woman identifies herself as a person who has been abused by her husband for the rest of their marriage.

## **3.3 Narrative is true**

This narrative is true because it makes the community aware that if you are married and you aren't faithful to your partner, your actions will always follow you like in this marriage. This man's lover follows him wherever he is. She doesn't care whether her actions will break this man's marriage.



#### **4. PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATION: PROCESS**

##### **4.1 Variety of narrative forms**

This narrative has one narrative form. It's comedy-romance narrative (Gergen: 197, fig. 8.2). This narrative has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

##### **4.2 Micro narrative**

This doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows that the story only covers the events around the woman and her abusive man.

##### **4.3 Nesting of narrative**

Nesting is not applicable because there is only one narrative.

#### **5. PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

##### **5.1 Regressive narrative**

The narrator solicits sympathy because she is left alone the first night of their marriage in a new house. Her husband has another woman's child. This woman abuses the narrator because she comes to her (narrator) husband to demand milk for her baby. The narrator isn't satisfied and she deserts her husband. The couple works their things out and the relationship becomes OK. The man's lover comes again to demand her baby's milk, the narrator beats her. The narrator's husband drinks heavily and he loses his job. Narrator becomes sick and her husband doesn't care. Her husband insults and beats her. She deserts him and they eventually divorce each other.

##### **5.2 Progressive narrative**

There is a progressive change in the narrator because she divorces her abusive man. Things are going just fine for her and her two children. She is no longer living in a shack house because she bought a loan house. Her lifestyle has improved.

#### **6. INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

##### **6.1 Moral evaluation**

The narrator will be evaluated within her community as an honest person because even though her husband ill-treated her that much, she still cares about him and she accepted him in her shack and she also found him a teaching post.

##### **6.2 Interminable negotiation**

The identity of the narrator as a person who cares for other people e.g. her husband when she accepted him back into her life after he has been deserted and finding him a job can



be sustained by the community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because she cares for others.

### 6.3 Reciprocal identities

The narrator accepts her husband back into her life with the hope that he will leave his old undesirable ways of life. And he also find him a job with the hope that maybe he will stop drinking heavily because he experienced the consequences of drinking heavily. The narrator's husband and his mistress contributed to their break up because the narrator's husband ill-treated his wife in these manners: Firstly, he left her alone for the whole night the first night of their marriage. Secondly, he enjoyed himself at a shebeen with girls. Thirdly, he abused his wife verbally and physically, through his drinking and womanizing: he no longer contributed to the finances of the family, he had other interests like stokvel, he vandalized his wife's shack, and by selling his wife's clothes.

His mistress's contribution:

She is impregnated by the narrator's husband. She told the narrator that she is pregnant with her man's (narrator) child. She abuses the narrator by demanding her child's milk from her husband.

## 7. EMOTIONS

- (a) Emotions of anger and resentment are apparent in this narrative. The narrator became angry when her husband didn't spend their first night in their new house with her. She also felt bitter to find out that her husband had impregnated another woman. She felt more bitter when that woman comes too often to ask for her baby's milk from her husband.
- (b) Yes, such emotions are embedded in the culture: It's normal for a person who just discovered that her husband has been unfaithful to her to feel angry and bitter.
- (c) The emotional expressions in the narrative are meaningful because the narrator has also a baby who needs milk, so, if someone else also need milk for her baby from her husband that makes her extremely unhappy.
- (d) Hostility is present in this narrative. Having been maltreated like that e.g. when the man's lover continues to come to the narrator's husband to ask for her baby's milk was enough to make the narrator to fight her. Hostility is acceptable in narrator's culture.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 COMPARISON OF THE FIVE NARRATIVES**

##### **6.1.1 The selection of events in the account: Plot structure**

The first narrative relates the experiences of a married woman who had eight children by her husband, but against the wishes of her husband. Her experiences with her husband and her life with her children are organized in a series of ten events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.

The second narrative relates to the experiences of a woman who was abused by her husband. The woman's story consists of three episodes in this regard. The first episode is her three years of happy marriage. The second episode relates to the abuse of her husband. The third episode is about her change. These episodes are discussed below:

#### **1. Three years of happy marriage**

The narrator's husband loved her so much. He called her sweetie and he also helped her with the washing. Everything was running smoothly the first three years of their marriage.

#### **2. Abuse of husband**

He visited shebeens, his love towards his wife disappeared, his wife was beaten by him. Wife left him but returned after help from her parents-in-law. They quarrel with bottle of spirits. The police were called but she withdrew the charge. He entertained girlfriend in her home. She stabbed him but sought help from her parents-in-law. Her husband kept on with adultery. She sought help from her mother but they were chased away. Fighting continued with attack with a spade but there was no reproach: She still loved him. Her husband insulted her at school and college even her husband's girlfriends, her husband denied parentage of third child. She complained to mother-in-law: She advised divorce. She was chased with a knife and she got divorce and custody of children.



### **3. Wife changed**

- 3.1 She went to school and college.
- 3.2 She took up teaching but the beating didn't stop.
- 3.3 She divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

The third narrative relates the experiences of a woman who is neglected by her husband for about thirty-four years. The life story does not give clear indications of events following each other, but it seems to concentrate on certain episodes in her marriage. Four such episodes have received attention:

#### **1. The husband**

He is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while his wife stayed in the Free State. He visits home irregularly, e.g., once in six months or even two years and a period of six years from 1972 – 1978 went by without any visit from him. He is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging; he doesn't want any visit from his wife and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children: his wife mentioned the problem of a son where he wouldn't like to be involved in the discipline of the child.

#### **2. The wife**

She stayed with her husband from 1971 but only got married after 1978. When her husband is at work in Vereeniging in Gauteng, she stayed at home in the Free State. The husband only infrequently visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Her husband had no knowledge of this. However, she continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging and his circumstances did not allow her to go permanently to Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. She kept on feeling very uncertain and she tried a number of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he



wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances. In the end the wife accepted her circumstances. She did not divorce him but she kept on receiving maintenance from him. She now works as an informal trader supporting herself.

### **3. Maintenance**

The wife had a continuous struggle to get maintenance from her husband. She initially received R50 per week. When she worked for a year in Bloemfontein she did not receive any maintenance from her husband. When the husband does visit home, he only gives money for specific items such as sugar, when asked for money. Eventually, the wife was advised to sue her husband for maintenance. She was awarded R50 per week, but she only received this for a few months. She couldn't get an order from the maintenance court because she did not have his physical address. Eventually this problem was solved and she now receives maintenance of R800 per month.

### **4. Children**

The narrator did not give the number of her children and this not clear how to judge her circumstances. The husband mentions children in the plural: *sebeletsa bana ba ka*. The wife also mentions more than one: *nka mpa ka re a sapote bana*. Only one child is explicitly mentioned, i.e., the son for whom she got no help in disciplining him.

The fourth narrative gives the experiences of a married woman who was abused by her husband. Her husband was also using witchcraft to get rid of her. Her experiences with her husband are organized in a series of eight events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.

The fifth narrative relates the experiences of a newly married woman whose husband's flame of love has gone out the first night of their marriage. Her experiences with her husband and her life with her two kids are organized in a series of nine events, which constitute the plot of the narrative.



### 6.1.2 Endpoint: Theme of the narrative

In the first narrative the theme of the narrative is co-operation. If there is no co-operation in the marriage, the marriage is bound to fail like this one. The woman doesn't want to co-operate because her husband has made his request clear that she must take precautionary measures so that they must have a limited number of children. His reasons are that he earns a low salary, he works alone, and his working conditions are not stable, but his wife doesn't want to co-operate. She wants to please her parents and her community.

The theme of the second narrative is woman abuse. This man abuses his wife physically, e.g. when he pours her with a spirit with an attempt of burning her and when he beats her. Emotionally, when he insults her e.g. by calling her a bitch, by cheating on her and by degrading her dignity by telling his neighbours that she has infected him with sexually transmitted diseases.

In the third narrative the theme is the neglected wife. This woman is neglected by her husband by not visiting her regularly, he visits home irregularly, e.g., once in six months, or two years and period of six years went by without any visit from him. He doesn't want any visit from his wife. When his wife visited him, she got insulted and chased home. He doesn't give his wife emotional support. He doesn't want to reveal his circumstances in Vereeniging to his wife. He is secretive about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't care about the raising of his children. He doesn't want to disclose any information about his circumstances to his wife.

The fourth narrative's theme is abuse. This man abuses his wife emotionally by cheating on her, by having a child with someone else, by talking sarcastically about his wife when he is with his lover, by building his lover a house, by calling his wife with bad names. And physically by bewitching her, and chasing her with knives and guns.

The central theme of the fifth narrative is abuse and the ways in which the narrator experienced this abuse are the following:



- (a) The problems of the first night of her marriage: The narrator's first night of her marriage wasn't the happy one because her husband left her alone for that whole night. He was enjoying himself with beer with other girls in a shebeen.
- (b) The presence of her husband's mistress in her home: Her husband's mistress came to her home and told her that her husband impregnated her.
- (c) Her husband abused her verbally and physically, through his drinking and womanizing: He no longer contributed to the finances of the family, he had other interests like stokvel, he had problems with his wife's shack and he was also used to sell his wife's clothes when she wasn't at home.

### 6.1.3 Ordering of events

#### 6.1.3.1 Sequence

In the first narrative, the events in this narrative are ordered in linear sequence. They follow one another in this manner: One event leads to the other. Firstly they have three kids and things were going smoothly, the wife was able to look after the kids. During the birth of the fourth kid, still things are going well, but the husband begins to feel that things might be difficult if a woman doesn't take precautionary measures. Secondly, the woman ignores her husband's advice, as the result of her ignorance, the husband deserts them. Thirdly, the children suffer, and her two daughters get involved in prostitution, as a result they die of AIDS.

In the second narrative there are three vents. There is a sequence within the events. Firstly, the narrator was abused by her husband to such an extent that she went to school and college to further her education. Secondly, she took up teaching but the beating didn't stop. Thirdly, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

In the third narrative, there is no clear indication of events following each other in this life story, but these four episodes did receive attention:



### **1. The husband**

He is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while his wife stayed in the Free State. He visits home irregularly, e.g., once in six months or even two years and a period of six years from 1972 – 1978 went by without any visit from him. He is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging; he doesn't want any visit from his wife and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children: his wife mentioned the problem of a son where he wouldn't like to be involved in the discipline of the child.

### **2. The wife**

She stayed with her husband from 1971 but only got married after 1978. When her husband is at work in Vereeniging in Gauteng, she stayed at home in the Free State. The husband only infrequently visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Her husband had no knowledge of this. However, she continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging and his circumstances did not allow her to go permanently to Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. She kept on feeling very uncertain and she tried a number of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances. In the end the wife accepted her circumstances. She did not divorce him but she kept on receiving maintenance from him. She now works as an informal trader supporting herself.

### **3. Maintenance**

The wife had a continuous struggle to get maintenance from her husband. She initially received R50 per week. When she worked for a year in Bloemfontein she did not receive any maintenance from her husband. When the husband does visit home, he only gives money for specific items such as sugar, when asked for money. Eventually, the wife was advised to sue her husband for maintenance. She was awarded R50 per week, but she



only received this for a few months. She couldn't get an order from the maintenance court because she did not have his physical address. Eventually this problem was solved and she now receives maintenance of R800 per month.

#### **4. Children**

The narrator did not give the number of her children and this not clear how to judge her circumstances. The husband mentions children in the plural: *sebeletsa bana ba ka*. The wife also mentions more than one: *nka mpa ka re a sapote bana*. Only one child is explicitly mentioned, i.e., the son for whom she got no help in disciplining him.

In the fourth narrative, the events in this narrative are ordered in a linear sequence. One event leads to the next. Firstly, the narrator gives a foreshadow of the events to come: her marriage deteriorated but originally the couple had a good life because they loved each other and she was promised that she will return to school. Their marriage has the ups and downs like any other marriages. Secondly, their relationship becomes unpleasant when the narrator's husband has a child with a married woman, and it becomes more unpleasant when he builds her a house. Thirdly, the man confesses to his wife, and his lover isn't happy about that, she goes to narrator's work and embarrasses her in front of her co-workers. The narrator has flashback about the events which led to marriage which are punishment by her parents, her abduction, no lobola: (i) she is uneducated; (ii) and when her husband say he never loved her. The narrator can't take it any longer, she ends the marriage.

The events in the fifth narrative are ordered in linear sequence. They follow one another in this manner: One event leads to the other. Firstly, the woman spends the first night in their new house alone, as a result their relationship becomes unpleasant. Secondly, the narrator's husband had a child with someone else and she comes any time to him to ask for her baby's milk. The narrator doesn't like this and she deserts him. They talked and she returned. The woman came again to ask for her baby's milk, the narrator beats her and she (narrator) went to stay in a shack house at Botshabelo. Thirdly, the man apologized and he stayed with his wife in a shack. He started again with his abuse, his wife divorces him.



### **6.1.3.2 Duration**

In the first narrative, the narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about twenty years.

The narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded in the second narrative is about fourteen years, from 1980 to December 1994.

In the third narrative, the narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about thirty-four years.

The narrative time which covers the time in which the story unfolded in the fourth narrative is about eighteen years.

In the fifth narrative, the narrative time that covers the time in which the story unfolded is about eleven years.

### **6.1.4 Stability of identity**

In the first narrative, the narrator has a coherent identity: She never falters in her beliefs about the duties of a wife and she kept on having children and trying to look after her family. The problems she encounters she believes to be the result of her husband's not supporting her family.

In the second narrative, this woman is a strong character because she went to school and college to further her education. She took up teaching and she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

In the third narrative, even though the narrator's husband neglected her so much, she seems as a strong person because she accepted her circumstances and she is trying by all means to look after her children and to keep life going. She is doing everything possible to put food on the table, e.g., by working as an informal trader.

In the fourth narrative, the character of the narrator displays two sides:



Firstly, she appears as a timid character that is easily influenced and manipulated. This can be seen in the following:

Her children: She had the first child while she was unmarried, and the second one while she was still at school.

Abused by her parents: She was punished, abducted as a result, she had problems with her in-laws.

She had problems with her husband: She gave excuses for him. Her husband's affair accepted by her.

Secondly she became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation. She divorced her husband and he was granted a court interdict.

In the fifth narrative, the narrator has a vacillating identity i.e., she continually changes her feelings towards her husband and she is at times uncertain of what action to take. She vacillates between two extremes: a timid and a strong person.

As a timid character:

- (a) She is afraid and has no confidence in herself at the beginning of the marriage.
- (b) She initially accepted the pregnant mistress.
- (c) She accepted the abuse of her husband as well as his womanizing and drinking: she lacks the courage to confront him.
- (d) She became ill because of this abuse.

As a strong character:

- (a) She went back to her family after the problems with the mistress.
- (b) She fought with the mistress.
- (c) She phoned her husband's work to find out if he is still employed.
- (d) She left her husband and went to stay in a shack.



- (e) She reported her husband's abuse.
- (f) She got an interdict against him and eventually divorced him.

### 6.1.5 Causal linkage

The events in the first narrative are causally linked. They show the relationship of cause and effect.

**Cause:** Her beliefs in the duties of a wife.

**Effect:** Desertion by the husband.

The couple married at an early stage. The wife had four children and the husband requested her to consult family planning because he feels that things might be difficult if his wife doesn't take precautionary measures. The wife doesn't co-operate because it's expected from Christians and her culture and she doesn't trust contraceptives. She had fifth child and her husband no longer sends her money. She asks her mother for help. Each time her husband came home she had another child until she had eight children. Her husband got retrenched and he stayed at Rustenburg with his lover. The wife remains in the shack with her children and two of her daughters became prostitutes and died of AIDS. Her husband didn't come for the funeral of her daughters. His wife is hurt but she still believed in a big family. She eventually accepted her circumstances and left her husband alone. She is now a domestic worker and she is able to take care of her children.

In the second narrative the events are causally linked. The events show the relationship of cause and effect.

In the second narrative the events are causally linked. The events show the relationship of cause and effect. Firstly, the narrator's husband abused her to such an extent that she went to school and college to further her education. Secondly, she took up teaching but the beating didn't stop as the result, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

In the third narrative the problem is that the narrator's husband is the migrant worker who is employed at the market in Vereeniging in Gauteng while the narrator stays in the Free



State. He husband only infrequently visited her with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died in 1982 and her husband had no knowledge of this. Her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging, she did go and visit him without his consent and she got insulted by him and chased home. The narrator tried a number of times to get her husband involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances, as a result the wife accepted her circumstances.

In the fourth narrative the events are causally linked. They show the relationship of cause and effect.

Firstly, the couple originally has a happy marriage. The wife becomes pregnant with her second child while she is at school. Her in-laws are against the fact that she should continue with her studies. Secondly, the man has a child with a married woman. This annoys his wife very much because he now talks badly about her to his lover. Thirdly, the man builds his lover a house, as a result, his wife's life becomes a living hell. Fourthly, the man confesses to his wife, as a result, his lover goes to her lover's wife and defames his character. Fifthly, the man promises to kill his wife, as a result, she ends the marriage.

The events in the fifth narrative are causally linked. They show the relationship of cause and effect.

Firstly, the man had a child with another woman, the woman demands milk from the narrator's husband. That annoys the narrator and she moved out for three months to stay with her family. Secondly, the couple sorts their differences out and the narrator comes back home. That woman comes again to demand the baby's milk, as a result the narrator lost her patience and fights her. Thirdly, narrator's husband drinks heavily and as a result he lost his job, that affected his wife so much and she became very ill. Fourthly, the man's abuse didn't stop, his wife deserts him again. Fifthly, the man becomes ill and he got admitted in a hospital. Sixthly, he was discharged and he apologized but the abuse didn't stop. His wife ends the marriage.



### **6.1.6 Demarcation signs**

There are no demarcation signs in the first narrative.

In the second narrative, the narrator uses the demarcation signs at the beginning and at the end of the narrative. The signals that indicate the beginning of the story are the following words: I can write a book with my experiences in my marital life. And the ones that indicate the end of the story are the following words: That was how my marital life had been. These words show exactly that the story ends.

There are no demarcation signs at the beginning of the third story, but there are at the end of the story. These words: this is the life that I live up to date show clearly that this story ends.

There are no demarcation signs in the fourth narrative.

There are no demarcation signs in the fifth narrative.

## **6.2 NARRATIVE FORM**

The first story has a progressive and regressive form.

The second story has a regressive and progressive narrative form.

The third narrative has only a regressive form.

The fourth narrative has a regressive and progressive form.

The fifth story has a regressive and progressive form.



### 6.2.1 Progressive narrative

The first narrative is progressive in the sense that the woman works as a domestic worker. She is now able to nourish her kids the way she wanted. Life goes well for the woman and her kids. They have direction in their new life after the father deserts them.

The second narrative is progressive because wife changed. She went to school and college to further her education, she took up teaching and he also divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

In the third narrative, there is no progress at all.

The fourth narrative is progressive in the sense that she became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation of her character. She divorced her husband and he was granted a court interdict.

The fifth narrative is progressive in the sense that the woman divorces her abusive husband. She buys a loan house, she is no longer living in a shack. Her two children are doing just fine. The eldest one is a nurse and the second one is doing grade 12.

### 6.2.2 Regressive narrative

The first narrative is regressive in the sense that now they have got more than expected number of children, and life doesn't go well for them. The husband loses his work, he deserts his family, kids resorts to prostitution, two of his kids die, and the woman ends up raising too many children.

*The second narrative is regressive in the sense that the narrator was abused by her husband in this manner:*

- (a) He visited shebeens, his love disappeared, wife was beaten by him.
- (b) They quarreled with bottle of spirits.
- (c) He entertained girlfriend in her home.



- (d) He kept on with adultery.
- (e) Fighting continued with attack with a spade.
- (f) He insulted her at school and college even her husband's girlfriends, her husband denied parentage of third child.
- (g) She was chased with a knife.

The third narrative is regressive in the sense that the narrator's husband seldom visited his wife with the result that she had an illegitimate child who died shortly after birth. The narrator continued being very uncertain in her marriage because her husband did not want her to visit him in Vereeniging. She gets no emotional support from her husband and when she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. Her husband is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging and he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't seem to care about the raising of his children.

The fourth narrative is regressive because the narrator becomes pregnant and she leaves school to look after her kids. Her husband cheats on her and he has a child with another man's wife. Her husband builds his lover a house. Her husband calls her with bad names, e.g. bitch and dog. Her husband bewitches her. She eventually ends the marriage.

The fifth narrative is regressive because the narrator sleeps alone the first night in their new house. Her husband spends that night with women at the shebeens. Her husband impregnates another woman. This woman annoys her when she demands milk from her husband and she deserts her husband. Narrator and her husband work things out and she comes back home. The woman comes again to demand her baby's milk, the narrator fights her. The narrator's husband is a womanizer and a heavy drinker. He loses his job as a result, his wife becomes sick. He doesn't support her. He insults and beats her together with the kids. The narrator deserts him again. The man is now living alone and he drinks heavily, he becomes sick and he is admitted in a hospital. He apologizes but the abuse didn't stop. His wife divorces him.



## 6.3 SELF-NARRATIVE

### 6.3.1 Relationship among self-relevant events across time

In the first narrative, the events are related in the sense that each event leads to the other. Firstly, the husband begins to feel that things might be difficult if a woman doesn't take precautionary measures. His wife doesn't want to co-operate, she has more than expected number of children and life doesn't go well, her husband deserts her. Secondly, kids suffer, and her two daughters resort to prostitution, as a result, they die of AIDS. Thirdly, the woman decides to work as a domestic worker and life goes well for them.

The sequence within the events in the second narrative is as follow: Firstly, the narrator's husband abused her, and she decided to go to school and college. Secondly, she took up teaching but her husband continued to abuse her. Thirdly, she divorced her husband and stayed with her children.

The third life story does not give clear indication of events following each other but the following did receive attention: Firstly, the husband only infrequently visit his wife with the result that she have an illegitimate child who died in 1982. Secondly, he is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging, he doesn't want any visit from his wife, his wife did go and visit him without his consent and she got insulted by him and chased home. Thirdly, the narrator kept feeling very uncertain and she tried a number of times to get him involved in her circumstances but he wouldn't divulge any information about his circumstances and as a result, she accepted her circumstances.

The eight events in paragraph 1.1.2 of the fourth narrative are related or connected to each other in the sense that in the first event, the narrator's marriage has deteriorated, this is connected with the problems she encountered with her in-laws that she should leave school, and by influencing her husband against her. The narrator's husband had an extra-marital affair with a married woman because things were not going well in his home, they had household fights. The narrator's husband poisoned his wife because he no longer loved her, that's why he called her with bad names, chased her with knife and gun, and denied parentage of his second child. The narrator's husband's confession is connected



with her husband's mistress's decision to go to abuse her at work. Her husband's mistress's abuse and her husband's abuse forced the narrator to end the marriage.

In the fifth narrative, the events are related in such a way that each event leads to the next. Firstly, the man had a child with another woman, this incident is connected to that woman's decision to demand her baby's milk from the narrator's man. Secondly, the narrator moved out because she also has a baby who needs that milk. Thirdly, the narrator and her husband sort things out and the narrator comes home again. The woman comes again to ask for her baby's milk. The narrator loses her patience and she fights her. Fourthly, the man drinks heavily and he loses his job, when his wife hears this she becomes sick. Fifthly, the man is always drunk and he insults and beats his wife together with the kids. His wife deserts him. He becomes ill and thereafter he apologizes and he moves into his wife's shack. The abuse didn't stop, his wife ends the marriage.

### **6.3.2 Social accounting**

The social accounting in the first narrative is that of self-justification: This shows how the narrator justifies her actions e.g. her cultural and Christian beliefs, her interpretation of the duties of a wife in marriage.

The social purpose that the second narrative fulfils is that of self-justification. She uses these words: This Satan's love. Which means if she didn't love him, she could have left him. She loves her husband so much, these words prove that: I even went to the lawyers, social workers, parents and police for help with the hope that he'll be a better person, loving husband and a father to his children.

The social purpose which the third narrative fulfils is self-identification. She identified herself as a mother and a neglected person. She is neglected by her husband who rarely visits her. Who doesn't want any visit from her. Who doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't give her emotional support, he doesn't care about the raising of his children.



In the fourth narrative, the narrator concentrates on self-identification: She identified herself as a lover, a mother, an abused person, she is vilified by her in-laws, parents, husband and her husband's mistress, she is bewitched, poisoned but then she appeared as a strong person.

The social purpose which the fifth story fulfills is that of self-identification. The woman identifies herself as a person who has been abused by her husband for the rest of their marriage.

### **6.3.3 Narrative is true**

In the first narrative, the narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if you aren't co-operative in your marriage, your marriage has great chances of falling apart. The partners who don't listen to each other and try to please other people than their partners their marriage will be like this one. It also makes the community aware that having many children that you can't afford to raise is not a good idea. Gone are those days where many children were appreciated. Nowadays life is very expensive.

The second narrative narrates true events in the life of married couples. In most marriages, at the early years of marriage, everything runs smoothly. As time goes on, the relationship becomes unpleasant. If the husband is abusive, cheats and doesn't respect his wife, the relationship is bound to fail like this one and ends in divorce.

The third narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if you're married, and you don't make time to be with your partner, she/he will try by all means to fill that gap like in this marriage. This woman needed the love and warmth of her partner, and he failed to give her that love, so his wife found it somewhere else.

The fourth narrative is true in the sense that it makes the community in which we live aware that if the parents are very strict and too protective, their children might make decisions that they might regret afterwards just to avoid their parents' punishment. Like in this marriage, this woman agreed to be abducted just to avoid being punished.



The fifth narrative is true because it makes the community aware that if you are married and you aren't faithful to your partner, your actions will always follow you like in this marriage. This man's lover follows him wherever he is. She doesn't care whether her actions will destroy this man's marriage.

## **6.4 PRACTICES OF SELF-NARRATIVE: PROCESS**

### **6.4.1 Variety of narrative forms**

The first narrative has one narrative form. It's comedy-romance narrative (Gergen: 197, fig. 8.2). This narrative has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

The second narrative shows one narrative form. This narrative form is also known as the comedy-romance narrative. It has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

The third narrative has one narrative form. It is known as regressive narrative. It links together events so that the movement along the evaluative dimension over time is decremental.

The fourth narrative has one narrative form. This narrative form is also known as the comedy-romance narrative (Gergen: p. 197, fig 8.2). Such narratives have a regressive beginning which ends in a progressive change.

The fifth narrative has one narrative form. It's comedy-romance narrative (Gergen: 197, fig. 8.2). This narrative has a regressive beginning and it ends in a progressive change.

### **6.4.2 Micro narrative**

The first narrative doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows that the narrative only covers the events around the children.



The second narrative is a micro-narrative because it doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows the events around the narrator's marriage.

The third narrative is a micro narrative because it doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. The narrative only covers the events around the woman and her husband.

The fourth narrative it's a micro narrative because it doesn't show everything of the consequences that happened. It shows that the narrative only covers the events around cheating and witchcraft.

The fifth narrative doesn't show everything of consequence that happened. It shows that the story only covers the events around the woman and her abusive man.

#### **6.4.3 Nesting of narratives**

Nesting is not applicable in the first narrative because there is only one narrative.

There is no nesting in the second narrative because there are no two plots.

Nesting is not applicable in the third narrative because there is only one narrative.

Nesting is not applicable in the fourth analysis because there is only one narrative.

Nesting is not applicable in the fifth narrative because there is only one narrative.

### **6.5 PRAGMATICS OF SELF-NARRATIVE**

#### **6.5.1 Regressive narrative**

In the first narrative, the narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that she has got more than expected number of children, and life doesn't go well for them. The husband loses his work, he deserts his family, kids resorts to prostitution, two of his kids die, and she ends up raising too many children.



In the second narrative, the narrator solicits sympathy because her husband abuses her physically by beating her, emotionally by insulting and cheating on her.

In the third narrative, the narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that her husband only seldom visited her. He doesn't want any visit from her. When she did go and visit him without his consent, she got insulted by him and chased home. His husband is very secretive about his circumstances in Vereeniging, he doesn't give her any information about his salary and other benefits. He also doesn't care about the raising of his children.

In the fourth narrative, the narrator solicits sympathy in the sense that she fails to continue with her studies, her husband has a child with another woman, and he also builds her a house, and her (narrator) life become difficult. So, the people pity her.

In the fifth narrative, the narrator solicits sympathy because she is left alone the first night of their marriage in a new house. Her husband has another woman's child. This woman abuses the narrator because she comes to her (narrator) husband to demand milk for her baby. The narrator isn't satisfied and she deserts her husband. The couple works their things out and the relationship becomes OK. The man's lover comes again to demand her baby's milk, the narrator beats her. The narrator's husband drinks heavily and he loses his job. Narrator becomes sick and her husband doesn't care. Her husband insults and beats her. She deserts him and they eventually divorce each other.

### **6.5.2 Progressive narrative**

In the first narrative, there is a progressive change in the narrator because she decides to leave her husband alone and she works as a domestic worker. She is now able to nourish her kids the way she wanted. Life goes well for the woman and her kids. They have direction in their new life after the father deserts them.

In the second narrative, there is a progressive change in the narrator because she has decided to go to school to further her education, she divorced her husband, and she is given the custody of the children.



In the third narrative, the narrator never really changed.

In the fourth narrative, the narrator became a strong person: She made a case against the mistress for defamation of her character, she divorced her husband and her husband was granted a court interdict.

In the fifth narrative, there is a progressive change in the narrator because she divorces her abusive man. Things are going just fine for her and her two children. She is no longer living in a shack house because she bought a loan house. Her lifestyle has improved.

## **6.6 INTERKNITTING OF IDENTITIES**

### **6.6.1 Moral evaluation**

Even though the narrator isn't co-operative with her husband in the first narrative, she wants to appear as an honest person to his community by doing what her mother and the community itself encourages her to do. So, her community evaluates her as an honest person.

In the second narrative, the narrator will be evaluated as an honest person because even though her husband abused her that much, she still loved him and she sought help from her mother and her mother-in-law but her husband's abuse didn't stop.

In the third narrative, the narrator is evaluated as a dishonest person in her community. She portrayed herself as a neglected woman who eventually resorted in adultery and as a result, she had an illegitimate child. So, the narrator will be seen as invalid person in her community.

In the fourth narrative, the narrator will be evaluated as an honest person within her community. She portrays herself as a person who always justifies her action, e.g. when she left school to look after her kids just because she didn't want to bother her in-laws with her responsibility.



In the fifth narrative, the narrator will be evaluated within her community as an honest person because even though her husband ill-treated her that much, she still cares about him and she accepted him in her shack and she also found him a teaching post. She will also be evaluated as a forgiving person because she forgave her husband after all the hurtful things he did to her, but her husband's abuse didn't stop, that's why she ended the marriage.

### **6.6.2 Interminable negotiation**

In the first narrative, the identity of the narrator as a person who sticks to what she believes in e.g. continuation of the family as it is expected from Christians and her culture can be sustained by the community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because of her honesty towards her believes.

In the second narrative, the identity of the narrator as a strong character e.g., when she changed for the better by going to school and college to further her education, by taking up teaching, and by divorcing her abusive husband can be sustained by the community. The woman will be seen as a valid person within her community.

In the third narrative, the identity of the narrator as a dishonest person cannot be sustained by her community. The narrator will be seen as invalid person within her community because of her dishonesty.

In the fourth narrative, the identity of the narrator as a person who doesn't run away from her responsibility can be sustained in her community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because of his responsibility.

In the fifth narrative, the identity of the narrator as a person who cares for other people e.g. her husband when she accepted him back into her life after he has been deserted and finding him a job can be sustained by the community. The narrator will be seen as a valid person within her community because she cares for others.



### 6.6.3 Reciprocal identities

In the first narrative, the narrator continues her family with the hope that her husband will appreciate that because it's expected from their culture.

In the second narrative, the narrator goes to her mother to complain about her abusive man with the hope that she'll talk to him, but her mother doesn't support her, she asked her to go back to her husband because they ate his lobola, and she (mother) can't sleep with son-in-law in the same house. The mistress of the narrator's husband told the narrator that she leave with her husband just to make her jealous and furious. She wanted the narrator to realize that her husband doesn't love her anymore. The narrator's husband goes with his mistress openly to show his wife that his heart belongs to another. The narrator's mother-in-law talked furiously with her in order to convince her that her husband doesn't love her any longer. Narrator's mother forced her to go back with her husband because she viewed divorce as a disgrace.

In the third narrative, the story is centred around the narrator and her husband only. It doesn't say much about other characters, e.g., the narrator's husband's senior. It tells us that his senior unsuccessfully tried to make peace between them by advising his colleague to find his wife a place where they could resolve their problems.

In the fourth narrative, the narrator's in-laws influence their son against his wife with the hope that he will leave her. And the narrator's husband's mistress damages her (narrator's) image with the hope of winning her husband.

In the fifth narrative, the narrator accepts her husband back into her life with the hope that he will leave his old undesirable ways of life. And she also find him a job with the hope that maybe he will stop drinking heavily because he experienced the consequences of drinking heavily. The narrator's husband and his mistress contributed to their break up because the narrator's husband ill-treated his wife in these manners: Firstly, he left her alone for the whole night the first night of their marriage. Secondly, he enjoyed himself at a shebeen with girls. Thirdly, he abused his wife verbally and physically, through his drinking and womanizing: he no longer contributed to the finances of the family, he had



other interests like stokvel, he vandalized his wife's shack, and by selling his wife's clothes.

His mistress's contribution:

She is impregnated by the narrator's husband. She told the narrator that she is pregnant with her man's (narrator) child. She abuses the narrator by demanding her child's milk from her husband.

## 6.7 EMOTIONS

In the first narrative, the following emotions are experienced:

- (a) This narrative conveys the emotions of anger, despair, and resentment. She experiences the feeling of complete loss after the death of her two daughters and when her husband left her for another woman.

In the second narrative, these emotions are experienced:

- (a) The narrator experiences the emotions of anger and resentment after she found out that her husband cheated on her. She showed this by stabbing him with a knife.

The following emotions are experienced in the third narrative:

- (a) The narrative conveys the emotions of anger and despair. To be insulted by your husband in front of his colleagues when visiting him and not knowing about his financial matter and many other things about him is enough to make a person angry.

In the fourth narrative these emotions are experienced:

- (a) The narrator experiences the emotion of anger and resentment after she found out that her husband has a child with another married woman and he also built her a house.

The following emotions are experienced in the fifth narrative:

- (a) Emotions of anger and resentment are apparent in this narrative. The narrator became angry when her husband didn't spend their first night in their new house with her. She also felt bitter to find out that her husband had impregnated another



woman. She felt more bitter when that woman comes too often to ask for her baby's milk from her husband.

- (b) Yes, in the first narrative, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who just lost her two daughters and her husband to feel angry and despair.
  - (b) Yes, in the second narrative, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who is betrayed like this to be angry.
  - (b) Yes, in the third narrative, such emotions are embedded in the culture. It's normal for a person who has been ill-treated this way to feel angry and despair.
  - (b) Yes, in the fourth narrative, such emotions are embedded within the culture. It's normal for a person who is ill-treated like this to be angry.
  - (b) Yes, in the fifth narrative, such emotions are embedded in the culture: It's normal for a person who just discovered that her husband has been unfaithful to her to feel angry and bitter.
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- (c) The emotional expression in the first narrative are meaningful because neglecting the family like that even during the death of a person's children it's heartbreaking. And choosing another woman over a person's family it's enough to make the narrator feel hurt and bitter.
  - (c) The emotional expression in the second narrative are meaningful because being betrayed to go to watch a soccer match far from home while your husband enjoys sex with another woman in your house is sickening.
  - (c) The emotional expression in the third narrative are meaningful because to stay with a man for about thirty-four years without knowing his salary, policies and where he works, it's heartbreaking.
  - (c) The emotional expression in the fourth narrative are meaningful because every woman who just find out that her husband isn't honest as she thinks becomes angry.
  - (c) The emotional expressions in the fifth narrative are meaningful because the narrator has also a baby who needs milk, so, if someone else also need milk for her baby from her husband that makes her extremely unhappy.



- (d) In the first narrative, being left with eight children and not getting support in time of need, e.g. during the death of the woman's two daughters made her hostile. Hostility is viewed as a normal thing within the narrator's culture.
- (d) Hostility is present in the second narrative. The narrator became hostile when she found another woman in her house so early in the morning. In Sesotho culture, hostility is acceptable. It's a normal thing to be angry and hostile to find out that your husband is seeing other women.
- (d) In the third narrative, being neglected like this made the narrator hostile. Hostility is viewed as a normal thing within the narrator's culture.
- (d) In the fourth narrative, the narrator becomes hostile. In her culture, hostility is acceptable. It's normal to be angry and hostile having been subjected to ill-treatment of this nature.
- (d) Hostility is present in the fifth narrative. Having been maltreated like that e.g. when the man's lover continues to come to the narrator's husband to ask for her baby's milk was enough to make the narrator to fight her. Hostility is acceptable in narrator's culture.



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